

# GIVE ME BACK

ISSUE #5

Pygmy Lush Dead Friends Kimya Dawson Next Victim Sean Mahan





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E-mail ads@givemeback.org if you need more information or if you are confused.

### Contributions

We're always looking for interesting interviews, pictures, letters and article ideas. We print what we like and we're tough, but fair.

### Reviews

We're always looking for new diy punk records, books and zines. If you just put something out, send us a copy to check out. Just please don't send us stuff with pre-printed barcodes on the cover. We reserve the right to not review sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise offensive garbage. Also, we now only accept review stuff from the actual bands, labels, authors, zinesters, etc. but not from PR companies, even "DIY" PR companies, sorry.

THE NEXT DEADLINE IS  
September 1<sup>st</sup>

# Letters!

Dear Fil, Katy, and the rest of the Give Me Back gang,

Thanks as usual for a great issue. Good columns, good interviews, good reviews—couldn't ask for much more. I loved the Teenage Cool Kids review especially. *Queer Salutations* is an awesome album, and Gordy Tornado's review was one of the most spot on music commentaries I've read all summer.

The punk teachers column always reminds me of the liner notes for the Spitboy LP. One of the band members talks about being a pre-school teacher, the importance of being able to shape a young person's life, and its relation to punk. I don't remember all of the details, and my records are in storage for the summer until I get back to school in a couple weeks, but I can make a copy and send it to you if you don't have the record or haven't seen it.

My only suggestion would be to have more bands with girls/women in the next issue (which I look forward to.) I thought it was interesting how the Zegota interview talked about gender and what place men can have in addressing this issue, but there's something about seeing interviews with punk ladies like those in Hey Girl! and Margaret Thrasher (plus I just think those bands are awesome.)

Give a shout if you're ever in Boston.

Love,  
Catherine  
Cambridge, MA

Catherine,

*I totally agree with you. It's always a concern for us to not just interview boy bands. And actually, earlier in the process of making this issue, one of our contributors, Katie, was working on getting her all-girl band to interview another all-girl band from your area. Unfortunately it fell through and since then, both bands have broken up, but efforts like that are inspiring to me. I would love to see lots of more creative features in the future.*

*Don't forget that you can always contribute as well. If there's a particular band, person, or project that you would like to interview or see interviewed, please get in touch, or better yet, go out and do it!*

- fil

Greetings From Phoenix—

Please give Mark McCoy a column. Hell, give him two! Truly enjoy his style, but not as a record reviewer! His reviews already read like a column broken into separate paragraphs.

The Julia Booze column in #4 was punishing! Like blood on the page!

Arthur

Arthur,

Mark was offered a column, but he declined and is actually taking a break from doing reviews as well, but only because he is pretty busy with his own projects right now.

I know his reviews tended to be harsh, but to be fair, in the last issue, as he was quick to point out, I did send him some stuff from the bottom of the barrel. My rationale was that if reviewers seem to trash everything, then maybe I should just send them the worst of it, but that didn't really work out.

I always stress to reviewers that our first responsibility is to describe the music to the reader, but as a reader myself, I would be intimidated by twenty pages of reviews if I didn't think there was hope for some entertainment value in there somewhere.

-fil

Dear Give Me Back,

I'm bored as fuck. Thanks to all of you at GMB for giving me something to read AND some inspiration to do something on my own. GMB is the main reason I decided to start my own zine. I think you have got the zine thing down—nice layouts, variety of bands (musical diversity) and interesting columns. Anyway, enough of my shit. Just wanted to give you some positive feedback/encouragement. Keep rockin' like you have.

Take care,  
Austin  
Westerville, OH

## STUFF WE'RE INTO

Meghan Minor

BAADER BRAINS • live at 924 Gilman  
MY DISCO • Paradise LP and live in Melbourne, AUS  
MAJORCA, THE DIAMOND SEA and CRUX • live in AUS  
WASTELAND (NZ) • live in Hamilton and Auckland, NZ  
STRANGERS and MALENGY ROBOT • live in NZ  
PUNCH • live at 924 Gilman and Boston, MA  
CULT RITUAL • live in Boston  
SCAPEGOAT and THE CONVERSIONS (last set) • live in Cambridge, MA  
BUNDABERG GINGER BEER (the best soda on earth!)  
TOFU-A-GO-GO in Greenfield, MA

Kirk MK-Ultra

DRUNKDRIVER • My Chinese Sister Cassette  
BONE AWL • Meaningless Leaning Mess LP  
MIDNIGHT • Complete and Total Fucking Midnight 2xLP  
INDIAN SUMMER • Hidden Arithmetic LP  
SLAVESCE • Heaven Only Knows Cassette  
BAADER BRAINS • The Complete Unfinished Works of the Young Tigers LP  
DIVISIONS • 7"  
-16 • Bridges to Burn LP  
LOTUS FUCKER • Answer=Bloodwashed Noise Cassette  
SYPHILITIC VAGINAS • LP

Fil

WE DO WHAT WE WANT • Olympia Punk Comp 7"  
ABNER JAY • The Story of... LP  
Daniel Higgs and Sam McPheeters • live in NYC  
FAILURES and SEX VID • live in Philadelphia  
Cramhole #3  
CULT RITUAL • LP  
ARCHIE BELL & THE DRELLS • Tighten Up LP  
MADE AUSTRIA • Beer Metal Sex Guitar DVD  
MINGERING MIKE • There's Nothing Wrong With You Baby 7"  
Summer in DC



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Julia Booze, Meghan Minior, Keith Rosson, Travis Fristoe, The Down There Health Collective, Hope Amico, Dave Sanders, Kirk MK Ultra, Gabriela Halasova, Spoonboy, Rich Diem, Brian, Bradley Napier, Juls Generic, Denman C. Anderson, Greg Harvester, Ryan Quinny, Stephen Pierce, Beck Levy, Hugh McElroy, Gordy Tornado, Stephen Pierce, Mikey Cantor, Chris Clavin, Katie O'Connor, Caitlin Sherwood, Christian Brady, David Pujol, James Metz and others.

### Cover

Mike Taylor/Pygmy Lush at the Girl Cave.

Photo by Fil

### back cover

Julia Booze

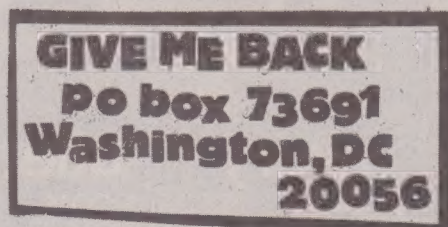
### special thanx to

Ebullition, No Idea!, Microcosm, Alternative Tentacles, Dischord, and all the bands and punks who help with distribution.

# Give Me Back



PAINTING BY SEAN MAHAN



[givemebackzine@hotmail.com](mailto:givemebackzine@hotmail.com)

[givemeback.org](http://givemeback.org)

## the **FIFTH** issue

You might have noticed that this issue is a little larger than the last few, and it's packed, so I won't take up a lot of your time.

It's true that it took a little longer than usual to make, but hopefully all the extra time spent on reorganizing will pay off in subsequent issues. It's an ongoing fuckstorm to figure out how to keep this project sustainable amidst an atmosphere of fear of "the death of print media," but right now, more than ever, I feel like we're winning.

As usual, I'm psyched as hell to get this issue out and to focus on the next one, but thanks to contributors and a steady flow of mail, we're already further into the next issue than ever before.

In other exciting news, the last issue is now sold out and issues two and three are "mail order only." Thanks so much for all the support and for ordering zines from as far away as Malaysia, Australia, and Russia!

As always, please get in touch if you are interested in contributing at all, or if you have ideas for things that you would like to see, or if you would just like to talk shit, or whatever.

xoxo,

Fil

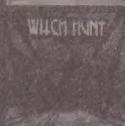
Retraction: I just finally got my first "new" turntable ever, after years and years of relying on a junky lil' thing that I got for \$10 with no belt. And well, among other things, I realized that I am now hearing records in Stereo for the first time. Apologies to any record that I've trashed in the last eight years.

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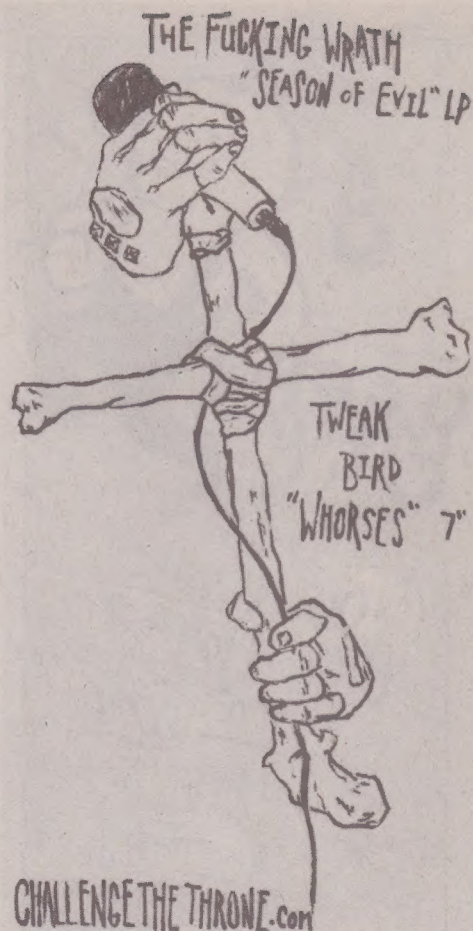
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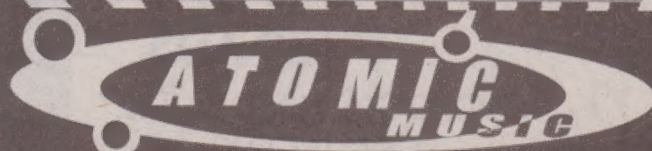


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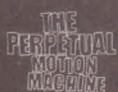


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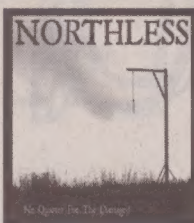
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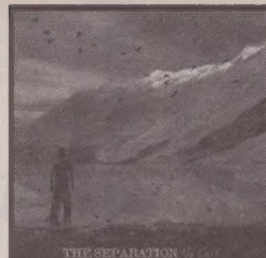
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## THE SEPARATION

The following is their split LP with  
Restrained. This material shows a true  
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rage and all around a heavier tone.  
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Druck, Ghastlimb). This mature sound  
favors bands such as Catharsis, Neqrys,  
Grimmwork and Unbroken. Limited first  
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THE SEPARATION 12" EP

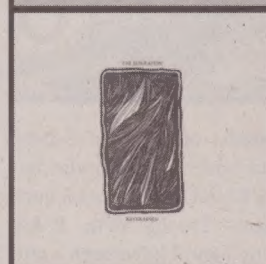


## RUN WITH THE HUNTED

DESTROY ALL COLORED - LP  
Phoenix, AZ's Run With the Hunted play  
modern hardcore packed with urgency  
and feeling, wearing their hearts on their  
sleeves and pouring everything they have  
into their sound. These four tracks are  
melodic, heavy and political, blending the  
sound of bands like Shay Hulud, Cursed,  
Modern Life Is War, final and even  
Propaganda. This 12" ep comes in a  
hand-screened cover and is limited to  
322 copies.

## RESTRAINED / THE SEPARATION

Split LP  
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outlets of today. While playing countless local  
shows and touring constantly they have opened  
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Studios, this record displays both bands deriving  
influences from pioneers such as Left For Dead,  
Catharsis, Integrity and His Hero is Gone. This is  
their most truthful, heavy and clearest work to  
date. The record includes a full printed recycled  
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# COLUMNS



For the past ten months or so, I have been working on a project with a person who has become an incredible friend. We started a band together that is a duo—Trophy Wife. It has been different than any band I have been a part of, in large part because with a duo, you forge only one emotional and artistic relationship. Additionally we have agreed to author lyrics together, while in practice.

I have learned a great deal from my band mate, Diane, and have grown to treasure this relationship. The other day we were having a conversation about outsiders—those deemed “crazy” by mainstream society, and perhaps even within our own “radical” communities. I was talking about how the burden of knowing you are an outsider adds to the pain of not fitting in. It is human to want to fit in, but some of the people that challenge and thrill me most NEVER will. Diane pointed out that instead of wondering what we can do to make it easier for those people to fit in or to be accepted, we really could endeavor to push the boundaries of why we aren’t looking to adapt as a society to them.

People on the fringe can often be fantastic truth tellers. It is strange how much most people change what they will offer up publicly of their true heart, their spirit, and their authentic self. Even in close interpersonal relationships, there is often a line placed around saying too much. We bite our tongues often. Perhaps this is why art and loud sound and music appeal to me: These are sanctioned spaces (to a degree) in which ostensibly one can say whatever one wants. I wonder sometimes about music, writing, and art—what the impact is on people’s personal lives for the things they say in a public space. I particularly wonder this for marginalized people. Often, the community uses these people as exorcists, shamans, scapegoats, or spectacles...and then we wonder

why some of these folks end up emotionally unwell or substance-addicted.

I wrestle with whether or not it is important to engage in cultural production, and if so, why? Another friend of Diane and mine recently brought up the idea that it is never fully selfless to make music or art, no matter how many people are following what you do. It is not a “gift” that one bestows on the masses. For this reason, I have always liked to work with bands and artists that seem interested in being part of their communities, and in creating a space and foundation to help other people share their work and creativity as well. I lament the era of extensive fliering and phone-calling for shows and DIY tours because I think that it helped people to build relationships and not view other folks as a tick on the tally of audience members at their shows. That is part of why I like being part of Give Me Back with Fil. It captures that spirit. I hope this zine is something that you can use to learn about a new band, gain a little more perspective on a person, or connect in a human way with someone whose ideas and work challenge you.

I also think there is a great deal of complexity about dissemination of cultural production now. I went to SXSW for the first time this year, and of course felt the weight of a corporate-ridden spring break-esque celebration of debauchery and sloganeering. But there were beautiful, exciting events happening there still—interesting bands of all different genres from all over the world and a festival atmosphere in which to hop from show to show. I like that local punks and even non-local punks have used the audience and the timing to set up their own events that are not part of the official showcase.

I just wonder where transgressive thought can be incubated. I wonder about ways in which I can be more restorative to the friends I have who make art that is so vital to me and who I know get exhausted in the process. I like the idea of building infrastructure and open, free spaces for people to write stories and songs that push envelopes. I like creating communities where we learn to take care of all of our members, not just the flashiest, most convivial, most attractive.

I made a new friend on my trip to Austin that also served to remind me that you can work from those spaces on the edge, and still have

tremendous impact, and find ways to not be relegated to loneliness. There are people that communicate in all different ways and just because someone’s voice might shock or perturb does not mean it should be any less audible.

I liked getting to listen in Austin. I liked seeing a band, Ponytail, whose vocalist Molly croons and yelps in what sounds like a made-up language—a newer, more joyful language than perhaps we have been given. I think about the Icarus Project, a radical organization building community for those who struggle with mental health issues, and I can’t help but think of my beautiful friends across the world, a number of who are often in pain because they do not quite fit in a world that punishes you in a host of ways when you don’t.

But, a pertinent and freeing idea about this is in Eve Ensler’s *Insecure at Last*, a book which emphasizes that most “security” we chase after is illusory at best. That doesn’t mean we can’t pursue stable lives as well as passionate ones, but it means we do need to come to peace with the notion that many factors are indeed out of our control. I am learning to try to take pride and act with deliberation around those elements that ARE in our control. To not speed through them.

I want to learn how to make more space for all kinds of ways of being on this earth. Music is relevant because it opens up this kind of possibility. It has kept a lot of us alive and moving in some of our darkest hours. It can be a salve, a flame, a blanket, an enemy, a lover, a child.

As spring moves in, I want to take more time to look and listen. I’m grateful for those voices, both the loud and the quiet, who have reminded and encouraged me to do so.

Nothing is static and no ending is scripted. Our lives aren’t those kinds of movies. Thanks to those who startle me into that realization time and again—this season, especially, it’s Thou, Thank God, Pygmylush, Turboslut, Polaroppositebear, Resin Hits, Snacktruck/ Ultra Dolphins, and my trophy wife.

As ever, feel free to get in touch.

katyotto@gmail.com



down & dirty with:

## THE DOWN THERE HEALTH COLLECTIVE

I'll  
sleep when  
I'm dead!

Well, I used to think that way. In my earlier days, I lived on three hours of sleep and had no problem functioning...until I crashed. It happened every two months like clockwork. I'd stay up late and get up early day after day and then I'd get super sick and have to stay in bed for a week. Now that I'm more seasoned, I've learned that I need sleep if I don't want to get sick. I need sleep to stay emotionally healthy. I need sleep to be able to focus on whatever it is that I'm doing. For a while I struggled with missing out on weeknight shows and worrying about feeling non-social or complacent for choosing to sleep instead of going to a party. I've come to terms with this and I hope that you will feel okay about it too. It's okay to take care of yourself!!

Most of us know that getting enough sleep is crucial to recovering from all kinds of seasonal bugs, and many of us have experienced a cold or flu as a result of just one sleepless night. The effects of sleep deprivation aren't always so obvious, though. These days, lots of research has illuminated the chronic effects of sleep deprivation: increased risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes, changes in normal hormonal patterns, increased inflammation, depression, and obesity. These "new" findings support what Grandma has always said: Get yer zzzzzs on!

### How much sleep is enough?

Sleep needs vary from person to person; some people feel fine with seven hours, some people need nine or more. Pay attention to how you feel after getting different amounts of sleep: Do you wake up naturally or need an alarm? Do you feel well rested, still sleepy, or lethargic? How do different amounts of sleep affect how you feel over the course of the day?

Sleep needs change a lot over the course of a person's life; Infants need to sleep tons, and requirements generally decline with age.

### Easier said than done...

Identifying the reasons why you're not sleeping enough can help you figure out how to work more sleep into your routine.

- Lack of time, maybe from long work hours or taking on lots of projects (try to schedule enough time for sleeping instead of just going to bed when everything else is done. You'll be more productive in your waking hours if you're well rested and healthy!)
- Erratic sleep schedule (especially night shift work schedules)

### • Insomnia

• Poor sleep quality (interrupted by pain, nightmares, sleep apnea, or caused by caffeine, nicotine, stimulating medications like asthma inhalers, etc.)

### What if I can't sleep?

Lots of people would love to sleep more but just can't fall asleep or stay asleep. If you struggle with insomnia, here are some things to try:

- Start by setting a bedtime goal that will allow you to get at least eight hours of sleep before you have to wake up.
- Some people can sleep when they need to but others need routine. Try going to bed/waking up at the same time every day.
- Do yoga or breathing exercises before going to sleep.
- Reward yourself for getting a week's sleep by going to a show or doing something else you like to do one or two nights out of each week that you meet your sleep goals.
- Prepare yourself for sleep: Avoid eating or exercising within three hours of going to bed. Melatonin, which is highest when you are sleeping, is closely related to low body temperature; raising body temperature may inhibit melatonin secretion and sleep. Lie down for a half hour to an hour before you intend to go to sleep. Maybe read something light or listen to quiet music.
- Keep lights to a minimum after sunset. Use the softest light you can without straining your eyes, and turn off lights in the room that aren't necessary.
- Eat most of your daily protein requirement at breakfast and lunch rather than dinner.
- Don't do anything but sleep and have sex in your bed. Don't allow your mind to associate your bed with anything but rest and relaxation.
- Spend some time outside every day during daylight hours. Exposure to the sun helps to keep your body's daily rhythms/functioning normally.
- Use heavy curtains or blinds to darken your room at night.
- Try keeping a list next to your bed and spend 15 minutes before you sleep to write down any thoughts about the next day.
- Use a fan or other white-noise maker to drown out group house ruckus.
- Nervines (herbs that help calm the nervous system) can help some people with insomnia. Your strategy may be tonic (regular doses of herbs that help soothe and nourish the nervous system without sedating) or as needed/acute (herbs taken when you're having trouble falling asleep—these may be mildly sedative and help you sleep in the moment.)

### Acute Nervines:

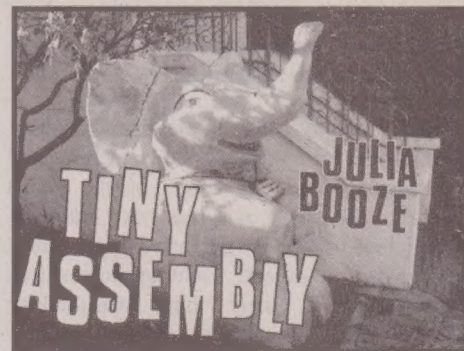
Valerian  
Anemone  
Skullcap  
Passionflower  
Epipactis

### Tonic Nervines:

Wild oats (tincture of fresh seed pods)  
Skullcap (tea or tincture)  
Motherwort (tea or tincture)  
Vervain (blue or English, tincture)  
Passionflower

(Overlap between these two categories means that an herb may be effective as either an acute remedy or a preventative/tonic)

Please feel free to contact us at [downtherehealth@mutualaid.org](mailto:downtherehealth@mutualaid.org). We love getting learning about others' experiences with this stuff!



### FUCK THE LAW, uh, I MEAN JERK OFF TO IT

When I was sixteen I had a job delivering drugs for a pharmacy in a tiny town in the east bay hills. Usually this meant bringing hormones and diapers to really old people that couldn't leave the house. I would get stoned in the parking lot across the street from the pharmacy, pick up my friends, and drive around in the hills, stopping for pizza and laying around by cement slides and waterfalls. Sometimes my duties were more serious, I would have to make deliveries to hospitals and nursing homes. One visit particularly stands out in my mind. I entered a long hallway full of ambulatory figures; some reached out to me much like zombies, the slow shuffle, and the dead eyes, possibly some drooling. A woman in a wheelchair cackled at me as she ran her chair into my shins. As I dropped my package and got the necessary signatures, I really wanted to get the hell out of there, but I had to pee. I slipped into the restroom past the demented drawn-out faces, and turned the light on in the windowless room. What lay in store for me, around the corner, was one of the most frightening sights I have ever witnessed. First let me describe the sound. Imagine the heaving sobs of say, a bull that has just eaten a rotting whale carcass. The heavy, thick fat globules are caught in his throat. He is trying to cough them out. While he is doing this, he is also grunting rhythmically and sucking the air in around those globules. What I saw when I turned the corner was a 80+ year old woman with no shirt on and her sweat pants stretched around her ankles, sitting on the toilet with both of her hands inside her vagina, past the wrists. Her



face was contorted and her eyes were rolled back in her head. What I then saw as the basic equivalent of a monster, I now realize was a lady who probably just wanted some privacy. Although she may not have been trying to fuck with me personally, it was sort of traumatic... I now know this "trauma" was the result of some internalized bigotry I had about aging, obesity, and mental health.

I think of this vivid memory, my first exposure to a masturbator, anytime the subject of public masturbation comes up, which seems to be kind of often around here. There is a typical scene that comes to mind, right? Some old nasty guy corners you in the library or on the train. He is menacing, evil, has no respect for women and actively wants to molest you. He is to be shunned and prosecuted. Right?

People—and by people, I mean my friends—seem to have a set arsenal of reactions and commentary about predators of the sexual nature. We see ourselves as informed, politicized, and on the defensive on the street, in our daily lives, and with our interactions with the world. Lately I have been thinking about THE LAW and whether it is useful to me. For Naomi, the law was on her side when the guy brushed his dick on her arm at the bus stop, and she had to testify against him in court. We are all glad that she had recourse for that horrible event. For a certain punk that recently tried to run for public office, the law was not on his side when he performed nude at a show. His past as a wild singer got him registered as a sex offender. Why are there laws about that? What precisely makes it illegal and dangerous for someone to touch him-or-herself, or be naked? I actually find it incredibly offensive that there is a law that dictates when and where I may touch my own body, or how much of it I am allowed to expose in public. Doesn't that seem insane? Are laws about public indecency just symptomatic of the lack of separation of church and state? Christian morality dictates that masturbation is wrong, that touching yourself is sinful and immoral, that sex and sexuality are to be confined and controlled within the respectable bedrooms of heterosexual spousal relations. Or are these laws in place to "protect" us from predators and perverts?

The first meaning of the word pervert was a verb, "to turn (any one) aside from a right to a false or erroneous religious belief or system", from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. It became a noun in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when it was used to describe someone who turned from good to evil, because they had forsaken the doctrine regarded as true. The question I have isn't "when did it become about sex?", but rather, "when did it lose its religious affiliation?"

Laws don't actually *protect* us. They may help bring justice after the fact, but laws don't

actually persuade the masturbators not to do so. I'm not advocating we get rid of public indecency laws, but I believe, if anything, we need to be able to protect ourselves, boiling water or mace, or whatever. For me, apparently good at avoiding perverts, masturbation was a bigger problem with my first boyfriend, who would auto-eroticize in bed with me if I didn't want to have sex that night, because, you know, blue balls. It was disgusting, manipulative, and emotionally abusive, but I didn't quite know how to articulate how and why yet when I was 18. There isn't a law that says your boyfriend should respect your right to consent to him masturbating in front of you, or a guidebook of why and when, either.

Recently I was walking home from the train, I was just nearing the corner I lived on when I heard a strange slapping sound, out of the corner of my eye a hurried movement. I looked just long enough to see the shape of a bent body, unclothed, his head curled over his arms. I saw the movement of his hand on his penis and heard his hand hit the fence at the end of the gesture. My pace immediately quickened. The sounds became clearer, I realized the rhythmic slap was his fist making contact with the gate he was crouched just behind, right there on the street in front of someone's door. I got home in two seconds, and skittered up the stairs to Lisa's room where I would feel safe and she would put the hot water bottle on me..

I forgot about it until a few weeks later when my roommate saw him. She was livid, boiling water to go pour over him. "Whoa, isn't that a little harsh?" I asked, "You could disfigure him!" She was too pissed to really go into it. A few minutes later she went outside with the pot of boiling water. I waited and contemplated her course of action. She was like, taking back the night. When she came back, she said he was gone before she got there. We sat at the table like a family to decide what to do. We talked for hours. Why did it bother her so much and me so little? Was it a case of feeling threatened? Triggering? Do you have to have been victimized previously to legitimately feel threatened later? Is an injury to one an injury to all? Is there empowerment in *not* caring? Is there more than one way to react, to deal with a given shitty situation depending on all the aspects and all the people involved? Is violence justified if it is a defense? Part of my indignation was feeling deprived of my own honest reaction. My genuine response, I guess, was fear initially, and then a little bit of threat, and then I didn't care at all. What made my roommate's reaction feel so much more feminist was it the anger? Why was I worried about my genuine sensibilities betraying me? Why did my non-action feel so *complicit*? I felt like because she was not only really pissed, but also DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT, that I was not paying enough attention.

She waited until she saw him a second time before she called the police. Guess what? They thought it was a waste of their time. Although they did come file a report, there didn't seem to be much more investigation, or any effort on their part to find out if he lived there or who he was, and they were sort of condescending about the whole matter. The dismissive behavior of the cops disappointed me, but I didn't understand why she was taking it that far, anyway. There has to be a review process for the various strata of dick-touchers. He didn't seem to be, um, bothering anyone on purpose. Although he was definitely including both my roommate and me in his sexual forthright-ness, it wasn't the same as what happened to Naomi at the bus stop...or when she was in the library and got cornered. Those were clear-cut situations where perpetrator was committing assault. Our Fence Jacker, in his own little world, may have been doing it there because his pleasure increased with the thought of being caught, not necessarily with the thought of inflicting himself on passersby. Or, he could be a predator waiting for the right person to walk by so he could make eye contact with them. He could be a predator-in-training, and this was the hazing ritual. Perhaps after he completed that session, he would have to move on to the playground. Or, he may have been mentally disabled, or a victim himself of sexual abuse and was acting out deviance as a response to that.

But there was nothing wrong with my roommate's reaction. She later was so mad that when she passed him, for the third or fourth time, jacking away, she stopped and confronted him. She yelled in his face "What is the number of this building?"; he looked up confused and scared. She realized that he was just a kid, maybe not even 18. He was frozen and couldn't speak. He looked up at the door, with a sense of trying to answer the question but he couldn't talk. He seemed to not know, what to do, as if ripped out of sleep, or some kind of reverie where he didn't realize where he was. She yelled at him for a while, trying to get him to say the address, so that she could report it to the cops this time.

And what about the law?

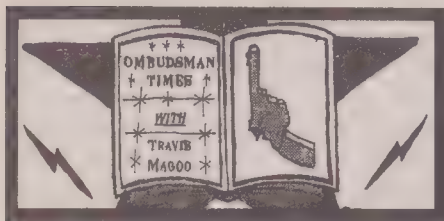
Here is an uncomfortable subject: I didn't feel like calling the police at any time because I felt like an invader in that neighborhood. I had recently moved to the Mission district, and even though I didn't have a fixed gear bike, I was still a young, alternative-looking white person in a neighborhood that is prominently lower-income Latino families. Who am I coming into this area and "feeling unsafe"? Not to say that everyone else in the neighborhood was fucking stoked about this masturbator, or that I was being, like, culturally insensitive for thinking it isn't appropriate to sling your dick against the door. I don't think only white people have



decency barometers, not that at all, it's just that I think there is something weird about living somewhere for less than six months and getting my panties in a bunch when something "urban" happens. How many other people had seen him that hadn't called the police? Which is a more racist scenario, excusing primate behavior because you are afraid of appearing racist, or being more threatened by a man of color than your own shitty white boyfriend? All of the above? Of course, the roommate in question had just spent almost ten years living in New Orleans, so it isn't like she landed in the Mission from some prim, prissy gated community. Incidentally, after she confronted him, we never saw him again.

And hey, look, *everybody* masturbates! Have you heard of YouTube?

PO Box 4985 / Berkeley, CA 94704



#### dead set on destruction

Biking yesterday I saw a bumper sticker combo that still has me perplexed. No, not an Against Me! and fraternity letters combination—that's an old Ark joke from Joey's pizza-delivery days. This was much, much scarier. The left bumper had a Hüsker Dü sticker. This I noticed first, and thought how I hadn't ever seen a Hüsker Dü sticker on a car before. But the other side was a cosmic hippie slogan even stranger—"If anything can go right, it will."

I trust that most Give Me Back readers are already familiar with the world view of Hüsker Dü. They have never been associated with past or present definitions of anarcho-punk, posicore, or the healing power of the universe. This is not a critique but rather an important fact as we think about the topic. Their song "The Real World" still haunts me—

"People talk about anarchy and taking up a fight / Well I'm afraid of things like that / I lock my doors at night / I don't rape, and I don't pillage other people's lives / I don't practice what you preach and I won't see through your eyes. / You want to change the world by breaking rules and laws / People don't do things like that in the real world at all / You're not a cop or a politician / You're a person too / You can sing any song you want / but you're still the same / I can't think of anything that makes me more

upset / People talk all this rhetoric / Forgive but not forget..."

That song opened 1983's *Metal Circus*. I'll say here that I love all the Hüsker Dü albums—from the aptly-titled *Land Speed Record* to the major-label betrayals of *Warehouse: Songs and Stories*. The mid-tempo frustration on *Candy Apple Grey* is the record I heard first and love most, but we can have that debate some other time, okay? Preferably in person and over a nice beverage on a breezy porch. Let's get back to the reactionary question of the song at hand.

To be as fair as possible, I don't know Hüsker Dü's experience with the more outspoken members of the scene at the time. When I think of punk circa 1982 it's the awesomeness of MDC, the Big Boys dance jams, Minor Threat's undeniableity, and the insert in the international PEACE comp. I wasn't moshing it up in the early 80s or marching on the streets, so this is all conjecture. I am older, but not first-wave. I don't doubt that a fair number of punxes (then and now) talking "about anarchy" can be hectoring dullards.

There's a lot going on in the lyrics, so let's take it bit by bit. I can see where the author (who I'm assuming is Bob Mould, since Grant Hart has a different lyrical style) is "afraid of things" like "taking up a fight." Cops have guns, nightsticks, handcuffs, and the legal-endorsement of the state to kill you. Not everyone, then or now, wants to live out Baader Brains samples. Most of us probably "lock our doors at night" just as we lock up our bikes. So, thus far the song's pretty interesting in the tension between personal safety and the attendant radical politics of punk. The singer doesn't want to subscribe to the world view of others and that's fine.

Realizing this discussion can & will quickly spiral out of control, I'll try to address some obvious points before going further. Having records on a punk/hardcore record label is no guarantor of progressive politics. i.e., anti-choice straight edgers, the homophobia in *Bad Brains*, the beef baloney of *Fear*, *Skrewdriver's* ridiculousity, and all the Christian/Krsna proselytizers. Conversely, I appreciate the honesty relayed in this first part of the song in question. Hüsker Dü could just be three dudes who write fantastic and usually heartbreaking tunes. I know that we can't always have every piece of the puzzle—the Ulysses line about "I want someone / who goes with me like bullets in a gun" isn't always possible in love, music, or politics.

Alright, ready for the next bit? Because here's where it gets effed-up. What's this "real world" that he's singing about where people don't do things like "breaking rules and laws?" Whether

we're talking about Reagan illegally union-busting the air-traffic controllers or the Weather organization detonating municipal buildings, real change comes from such actions. That's empirical fact. Where are these song lyrics coming from?

Let's keep going. We can't ignore issues just because they become perplexing and alien. "You're not a cop or a politician — you're a person, too." Hmm. No, there's not many punxes that I know who are part of the police or political apparatus. But saying we're all people is some of that hippie woo-woo. No one wants to go there.

The next lines are the most troubling though—"sing any song you like / you're still the same." No. I absolutely refuse to believe that. Anyone can sing anything here in America, sure. With the entire range of sincerity, irony & context. But to deny the alchemy of a microphone? And the transformative potential of the show space? I cannot stomach that Hüsker Dü believes that either, even with their Midwestern nihilism. We will not be the same, and we will not stay the same as we were raised. We will not be bound to when and where and to whom we were born.

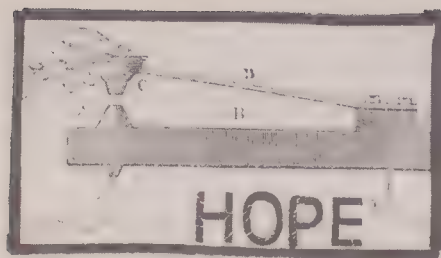
The last refrain is inscrutable in its personal frustration—"I can't think of anything that makes me more upset / People talk all this rhetoric / forgive but not forget." Clearly there's something going on there, but we're not privy to the details. What are we forgiving and/or forgetting? I want to be fair to the band here, but they're giving me no clues. Nothing aside from the band's usual breaking into brilliant shards of breakneck pounding. Most Hüsker Dü songs explode that way, the alchemy leaving you quietly shell-shocked as the last notes ring out.

The subsequent songs on this side of the album move deeper into the political and personal, and you can follow at your own risk. "Deadly Skies" is about nuclear holocaust. "It's Not Funny Anymore" is as crushing a love song as you'll ever find. And the last song is about the bottle winning, a story you've probably heard.

So it's just songs, right? Now 15 years old. The hardcore/punk scene still has some serious, seemingly intractable problems (sexual assault, depression, substance abuse, sustainability...). But I am so glad we have this forum—this intentional space—to talk about it, and music to keep the flames. Why would we give it up or turn it over to the squares?

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## Year End Review

### 1. You are not Forgiven

Screaming from the record player, a friend's band was sending me the messages I didn't need to hear. I know. I fucked up. Sometimes there is nothing you can do. Ask for forgiveness? It seems laughable. I wouldn't listen to me. Have you ever done something you suspected was maybe not entirely right? Then the sun comes up, the phone rings and the obviousness of it all is blinding. I said nothing because I felt like there was nothing I could say. Months later I still can't justify it. You don't need the details—fill them in with your own. You've done this too.

### 2. Baton Rouge General Hospital

"Can you walk?" the doctor cradling my ankle asks me. I look to my roommate, who has been my crutch for the past two hours. This morning, a kindly 60-year old lady ran a stop sign and rolled her car into me, and then my roommate, as we were riding our bikes downtown. We were knocked over and then under her bumper. I shake my head, "no". "Not at all?" The doctor posed, "If there was a fire, would you be able to get out?"

The doctor has me limp painfully across the room, then orders x-rays. My roommate and I think we are so funny, imagining driving and doing household duties with my injured leg and her swollen elbow. Imagine us swing dancing! I can steer the car if she pushes the pedals! In the end, nothing is broken and we are each sent home with a prescription for a boring anti-inflammatory. I am not too disappointed with my medication until I spend hours at a friend's house, painfully awake, mumbling with eyes half open, exhausted but too uncomfortable to sleep.

Pain is a simple, obvious way to let the body know that something is wrong. Once I was given painkillers that I was hesitant to take. The doctor reminded me that I would not heal if my body wasn't resting and relaxed. But could I get out the door in case of fire? People are capable of extraordinary things. There's an urban legend about the mother who lifts a car to rescue her trapped child. Adrenaline wins. All I have is a healthy aversion to re-injuring a ligament that will not heal. In the moment, emotions overcome reason and physical limitations. What about everyday endurance?

Is the doctor really questioning my ordinary shortcomings? Could he know too?

### 3. Thanksgiving

A few days without classes or work and I realize that in Baton Rouge, I know only three people I could invite over for dinner. One of them is my roommate, out of town for the holiday. I realize I am not the hermit I claim to be. I feel a million miles away from family. Without schoolwork to do, I have time to contemplate. I clean the house. I think about moving closer to my sisters, transferring to another school, moving out of the country. Not because it would cure this feeling called loneliness, but because I am assessing all my options to realize again that I chose this for a reason.

Answering the question "Where are you from?" is a tricky at best. At school, the people around me mean "Where did you grow up?" or, "Where is your family?" I say I moved from New Orleans though I am not foolish enough to justify myself saying I am from there. I still talk too fast to be mistaken for being from anywhere but New England. The past few years have affected me irreversibly and it isn't just love. Or fear. Deciding to move away from New Orleans was saying I had enough of it. Enough fear and struggle—struggle to maintain my health, to remain human in a place that dances brutally between life and death. I know I have good reasons for leaving. I don't miss it in the way I expected. I knew that four months in college would make me want something more familiar, a more familiar city, my friends, but I didn't expect to plan the familiar escape. When it crashes on me on Thanksgiving, I had already told myself that I had to stay for a while. I daydream, plan out possible future plans while sweeping the rugs and doing the dishes. When my roommate comes home, we write it all down: How to Stay in Baton Rouge.

In relationships there are always the questions of how to balance needs and wants, expectations and reality, staying in the moment without ignoring the future. Anything is possible but how long will we delude ourselves when we know that ultimately we have different destinations? Or do we just try and enjoy the path as it comes? What can you live with? This surfaces lately in many of my friendships. What actions are forgivable? Yeah, yeah, everyone makes mistakes. What is the difference between a bad friend and a bad person? Remorse? Frequency? Circumstance? In the novel *High Fidelity*, Nick Hornby has the narrator list five terrible things he did in his most recent relationship, with little explanation or apology. Then he says if you think he sounds like an asshole, write down the five worst things you did in your most recent relationship without flourish and see how it sounds. This is not dismissal of our actions; all the reassurance and apologizing and rationalization don't mend hurt feelings.

How much will you forgive of other people? More importantly, of yourself? I believe in high expectations but I've had a few reasons to be humbled this year. At what point do you call it a draw, stop answering the phone, or swallow all the bitter and forgive? Or when do you accept that your actions are irreversible and the best you can do is to not repeat them?

I've been writing for a few years about the reasons to love and leave New Orleans. Now that I am 80 miles away, I have a slightly different perspective. I may be bored sometimes in Baton Rouge, but I have not been afraid to walk home. I want to believe that personal safety is something I can project around me. What will you compromise to live where you love, where your friends are? Do you consider it compromise? The fear for my personal safety and the safety of my friends wears me down. But sometimes you fall in love despite all the signs saying it will never work.

### 4. Happy New Year

The past two years I have resolved to act with more love and less anger. This year, I resolve to focus on the present. All this planning to leave does not help me make friends here in Baton Rouge. It is good to look up from your path and see where you are heading but not at the risk of tripping over your own feet.

I have re-injured my ankle but I can walk to the door. To answer the doctor, yes, I could make it out if there was a fire, but carefully, carefully.

I usually love tangents, footnotes, and giving away the details. But I think this time we'll keep a little grace, something I've been sorely lacking.

Here's to 2009.

Write: PO Box 16360 Baton Rouge LA 70893



***Still(ed) Life! Comes With Real Ghosts! Or Disjointed Ruminations on Living In the Moment While Remembering the Past!***

If "ghosts" is too emo for you, I understand. I mean, it's *Give Me Back*, I thought you could deal, but whatever.

Call them, then, the machinations of memory. Call them regrets distilled.



1.

August arrived. As the summer heat slowly unfurled like a flag, as the beautiful girls went in and out of the tattoo parlor down the street, as the people began gathering at the bus stop outside the methadone clinic by five am, I had found myself thinking of you frequently and, by then, for some time. Knowing the anniversary of your death was heading down the hallway. Heading towards me. I found that thoughts of you—quelled somewhat during the howling storms of fall and the brittle cold of winter, through band tours and brutal hangovers, through awkward sex and cigarette coughs and work and debt—bloomed as spring did. Shit, by summertime, memories of you were slung against my skin the way a hipster wears a messenger bag. The anniversary of your death, of your life, weighed on my mind.

One year in the ground and not much up top here has changed. We are still embroiled in war. The sound of voices on the radio at night still serve as a buoy in the darkness. I still drink too much. I am still as lost and fumbling as I have ever been. Still afraid sometimes and tired almost always and often quick to anger.

This man, my father. This man as marred and complicated and fucked up as any of us, more than many. This man estranged by the end of his life from nearly everyone who ever spoke his name. This man who died at ten in the morning and the way they knew was because he knocked his beer bottle from the arm of the porch swing where it shattered on the ground.

This man whose memory—and goddamn, memories are merciless with their power and weight sometimes—clanged in my heart like a drum.

In early August, thinking the anniversary was near, immersed in memories of you both violent and tender, I removed your obituary, smoothed those rough edges and read of fifty-six years distilled into two paragraphs.

And I was awed suddenly with an arrow of guilt, so taut and well-aimed:

You died in July.  
It's laughable.  
I'd missed the date by a good five weeks or so.

On the anniversary of your death, my father's death, I was probably knocking my own pint glass to the ground.

This, then, incandescent as a fucking flare: a son's shame.

2.

To think that *fifteen years* have passed since Mia Zapata, vocalist for the Gits, was murdered. That five have passed since a man was convicted of that murder. That that band's output has acted as impetus and salve to me for over half my life at this point.

Watching the new Gits documentary, twice

during the one-week run at the Clinton St. Theater, I felt like there were ghosts all over the room of that fucking place—in all the empty seats, up there smacking the projection screen, knocking plastic cups over, trying to steal my cigarettes. Roaring in the aisles. It is a haunting film in spite of its flaws.

The inherent wonder: that words on paper and a voice howling through dented speakers may carve their way into the annals of your life, how you carry yourself through the world.

That people you have never met have the power to change your life.

That a song may save you, over and over throughout the years.

3.

At night I am shot through with restlessness and caffeine. The subtle din of laughter in the bar across the street, the clank of glasses and the thin thunder of the jukebox. Sweat crawling down my sides, fan doing nothing but pushing hot air around the room.

At night I step out onto the porch, below the burning porch light, its sides festooned with cobwebs and the corpses of desiccated moths and mosquito hawks. I walk down the steps to the parking lot, the heat like a hand or a blanket wrapping itself around me, and I smoke, the whirring crickets like some half-assed symphony in the background. The cemetery a half block away, the trees like arms rising dark and solemn from the ground.

At night I am visited mercilessly by these ghosts and so many more, by an endless succession of memories that curl around my head with the cigarette smoke; loves ruined or hollowed out; friendships I could have, should have, salvaged; countless things I have said or did not say; mistakes that still anchor me with their power—sometimes years and years later—that still make me wince, mundane or monstrous.

Regret is a very real thing at times like these, the night heavy with heat and the sounds of the bar-goers let loose from the bar. It is too hot to sleep. I drink pot after pot of coffee until my hands shake, until my nerves are ragged and to sit still requires too much concentration.

At night I smoke in the parking lot, walking the perimeter of that blacktop, just another self-imposed, four-cornered room. I try to remember what it was like to feel that simple, unadulterated joy that would burst through me on nights like this as a younger man. The scent of summer, the fearlessness thrumming through me like electricity. A joy that has since been carved loose from me, replaced with fear of debt collectors, of looming and inflexible deadlines, of lovelessness, of growing old, of the dead, of time passing by.

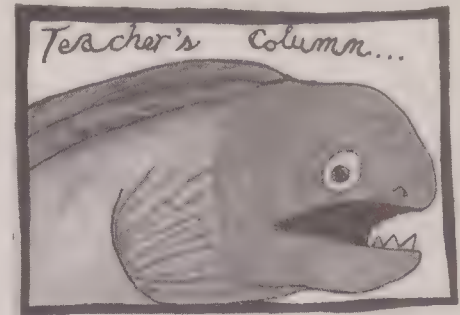
This ghosting process. This kind of living death.

The difficulty: how we must somehow manage to honor memory and the past while still living and breathing *here*. While still loving clumsily, fiercely, as best we can. How memories can freeze us with regret, how easy it is to become lost in them.

The difficulty: to simultaneously embrace life and honor the past.

To believe in anthems again.

Keith Rosson / 2634 SE Morrison / Portland, OR 97214 / keithrosson.com / keithrosson@gmail.com



Dylan Miner and Estrella Torrez

“Claiming the University as a Punk Space”

Punk and academia are queer bedfellows. Any hardcore kid who has spent time in a university classroom will recognize the inherent contradiction between her/his anarchic (and activist) desires to create an alternative and equitable society and the university's ability to restrict all counter-hegemonic voices within it. Although conservative pundits (such as David Horowitz), portray the university as an autonomous sphere where old Left intellectuals train and inform new generations of anti-capitalist activists, the university allows only a minimal degree of dissent before discarding those rebellious and anti-authoritarian voices. The high-stakes examples of tenure-dismissal and tenure-denial for Indigenous activist-intellectuals Ward Churchill and Andrea Smith are only two of our allies who have been denied a space within the university.

Let's be honest: Higher education could care less about the things punk care about, such as radical feminism, anti-capitalist self-organization, Third World liberation, veganism, or the production of new and liberated societies. While the university has the façade of radicalism, it is nothing more than a “free-trade area” where the capitalist model of intellectual entrepreneurship has superseded any organic means of disseminating knowledge. It has become a space that proposes the development of an “engaged global citizenry,” while ignoring the most fundamental issues of inequality and disregarding the basic educational tools needed to truly open discussions of what being an



"engaged global citizen" is, why it is important, and how we may actually become one.

One aspect of being a global citizen is commonly interpreted into a crass form of voluntarism. Each year, thousands of students enter "volunteering obligations," without understanding the very systems that necessitate them partaking in such practices. Volunteers enter soup kitchens, homeless shelters, suicide hotline centers and the like, spending a few hours in the institution (enough to report back to their professor in the form of a power point presentation or final paper) without the rudimentary knowledge that would enable them to critique the capitalist origins of their need to volunteer.

Instead of evoking a commitment to active social transformation, the university has become a space where corporate colonization impedes and inhibits the (presumably) public space of the university. Although dialogue is at the core of any revolutionary education, the dominant pedagogical (teaching) mode used within the university classroom remains alienated from any authentic learning. This is not to say that the university (and those of us operating within its grasp) does not foster the specter of a new world. In many ways, as students and intellectual workers, we believe that it does. This is the reason, I suppose, that there are punks and anarchists operating within the university's framework, both as students and professors. But all too frequently, this specter haunting academia is simply the veneer of potential democratic engagement.

In turn, the university has become adept at pretending to allow resistant practices [italic] within [end italic] its structure. These dissenting voices may be politically motivated (anarchists, punks, Marxists, council communists, or anti-authoritarians), or their very presence in the university may challenge the status quo (Chicana/os and Latina/os, Blacks, American Indians, immigrants, working-class kids, or women and feminists). For the most part, schools are a system of dominance. As many critical pedagogues such as Paolo Freire, Antonia Darder, Paul Willis, and Joel Spring point out, public education has historically been the location where students learn (and accept as natural) their marginal place in the existing social order. This makes me wonder where punks and hardcore kids have learned to accept our role on the margins of society?

Although neither of us believe that punk should be mainstreamed and therefore lose its oppositional nature and liberating potential, we are nonetheless of the opinion that by infiltrating the academy, the presence of our punk knowledge systems will likewise begin to penetrate the fucked-up nature of capitalist infrastructure. Moreover, by alienating certain sectors of society from the university system

(or those of us that negate our privilege by choosing not to attend university), we simply begin to accept our own place on the margins of contemporary society. Although we advocate for the creation of parallel institutions, such as free-schools and open-universities, we also believe that punk intellectuals and other radicals must never consent to being denied a place within the academy.

Unfortunately, this continues to happen! How many of you, dear readers, have registered for a university course, elated about the prospects of engaging in academic-based activist projects, only to be shut down by a professor who was unable to understand the realities of the DIY ethic? We have each had many conversations over the years with friends, acquaintances, comrades, and fellow punks whose knowledge and experience were deemed insufficient against those of the university. Forced out by biased and un-accepting professors, many of these punk kids decided to leave academia, rather than stay and (re)claim the academy as our own. So at this moment, we stand firm. We demand that the time is now when we begin to declare the university as a punk space!

The tenants of hardcore, as expressed in Craig O'Hara's [italic]The Philosophy of Punk,[end italic] are based in our collective response to our shared experiences of capitalist alienation. If we have any hope to circumvent capitalism and the affiliated processes of corporate globalization, we must begin to use pedagogy (both within and without dominant systems) as a means toward liberation. Although we may begin to create alternative infrastructure, which we believe must be amplified, the reclamation of the university must also occur.

Our pessimistic orientation, however, only highlights one vantage point on the oppressive nature of schooling. Seminal vegan, anarchist, pro-queer, peace-punks Propagandi offer an alternate way of position knowledge and the education system. Accordingly, Propagandi maintain in their typical tongue-in-cheek fashion:

*At some turning point in history  
Some fuck-face realized  
That knowledge tends to democratize...*

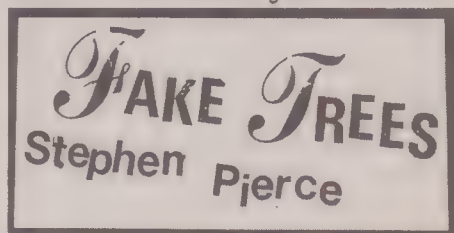
We cannot help but commenting on how beautifully written these lyrics are.

Although the educational system may be used to marginalize and oppress certain segments of the population, it may also be used to counter these practices. Education, in the eyes of Paolo Freire and his revolutionary *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, is at the core of any radical social change. Moreover, it is here where cultural workers choose to either actively work to politicize or depoliticize those that enter the space.

If we, as punk teachers and professors, are truly intent on creating a democratic and equitable society, we must, begin to open up what we consider knowledge to include punk epistemology, as well as begin to infiltrate the university, both as students and faculty. By doing so, we will amplify what is presently being done and finally produce "a new world in the shell of the old," as the Wobblies have always maintained. We must discontinue the progression of the university as an industry that produces depoliticized workers. This is not to say that faculty and students who are actively creating radical spaces within the academy do not exist in fact they do, however, not in critical mass or centralized within one locale. These spaces are still quite minimal in number. Once punk academics establish intellectual communities that support critical thinking, encourage activist work, and develop alternative futures, the capitalist tide within the academy will begin to change.

*The authors are presently coordinating a conference at Michigan State University for punk teachers and intellectuals, both within the university and public school system, as well as those working in parallel "institutions." From this, they hope to create a vibrant and active network and possible publication for those committed to punk pedagogy. If interested, contact at dminer@msu.edu or torrezjs@msu.edu.*

*and a last minute guest column!*



#### Let God Sort 'Em Out.

Elementary school 1988, an affluent suburban Boston town. Second graders, myself among them, staging a mock-election. What an insidious idea, what a transparent plot to uncover the politics of a young kid's parents. Of course of course we were going to support the candidate that Mommy & Daddy were backing. Bush v. Dukakis... I stood on the Dukakis side with one or two other melting candles and drooping teddy bears. I stood outnumbered with my cardboard box robots and my vague understanding of rudimentary addition, but why? Because my parents were of the Democratic Party, or because I firmly believed in a reprieve from Reagan's era of terror?

I wish I could say that at the age of six, I already knew that twenty years later I'd be celebrating the death of an American icon.

Let's give it up for Reagan-era hardcore, but let's also question why the Bush years failed to



produce an uprising of such youthful urgency, of so much energy and vitriol. Punk or not, have we become culturally complacent? Are we all so convinced that 'everything's gonna be ok' that we don't feel the need to act in order to assure that it will be? Let's not brandish that sort of faith; it puts us in league with delusional fucks like Bush II and Reagan. They were not divinely appointed, and there is no guiding force in our lives that will assure our perennial welfare.

This all raises an interesting question about post-Bush hardcore & punk rock. Barack Obama has an unprecedented amount of support from people involved in the punk community, where Bush had only Dave Smalley and a gaggle of other small-minded sad-sack washups at his back. Where do we take the fight when so many of our respected peers are supporters? I think that it will become quite evident - as it is already beginning to - that faith in a position as bureaucratically entwined as the US presidency is bound to disappoint. Supposed 'renegade' messages become watered down. Definites become maybes, now becomes someday. Further, having a better-than-usual president makes "the enemy" a more nebulous and fluid an entity. If anything, the Obama years will hopefully find our community digging deeper, finding the more nuanced and complicated battles that we have yet to fight.

Bush made it easy on us. "Fuck Bush" - It began & ended there for a lot of people involved in our community. United in our disapproval for a figurehead, but not feeling any sort of push to further the fight. There was no Bush-era hardcore. I'm surprised that bands are STILL writing songs about Reagan. Maybe I shouldn't be; the fucker is so deeply intertwined with the origins of our culture. He gave our anger a focus. He gave us a target - a very deserving and sensationalized target. He gave us an escape.

So my question is this - Five years past Reagan, where are we, culturally speaking? Where are we headed, and how do we keep ourselves from spiraling into the depths of redundancy? I don't want to hear the same songs. I don't want to write the same lyrics. I don't want to read the same zines.

So if we're going to define our movement by our national leaders, this is Obama-era hardcore.

Let's make some fucking racket.

#### A New Brooklyn

It's summertime in the city again, and as usual, I've been finding myself looking for an escape. A way out of the depressive gray & brown & shit-guttered brokedown Brooklyn side streets. Sometimes it seems that this city isn't for me or my friends - that there is nowhere for us to go, no place to call our own. Our communities are formed on rooftops & backyards, sweaty drunk

living room shows & shared lamentations of the new chain link fences put up at our favorite outdoor drinking spots.

We hang our heads over our new warrants, our new drinking in public tickets, our latest bike wrecks & muggings. No, this city wasn't made for us, but as my housemate Alex pointed out - there is far more to it than these broken down tenements we call our homes. "Our" Brooklyn is only a tiny sliver of the greater New York City; Our limitations are self-imposed, and there is a wealth of experience to be found outside of our bubble.

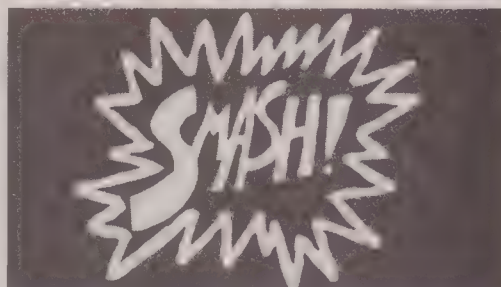
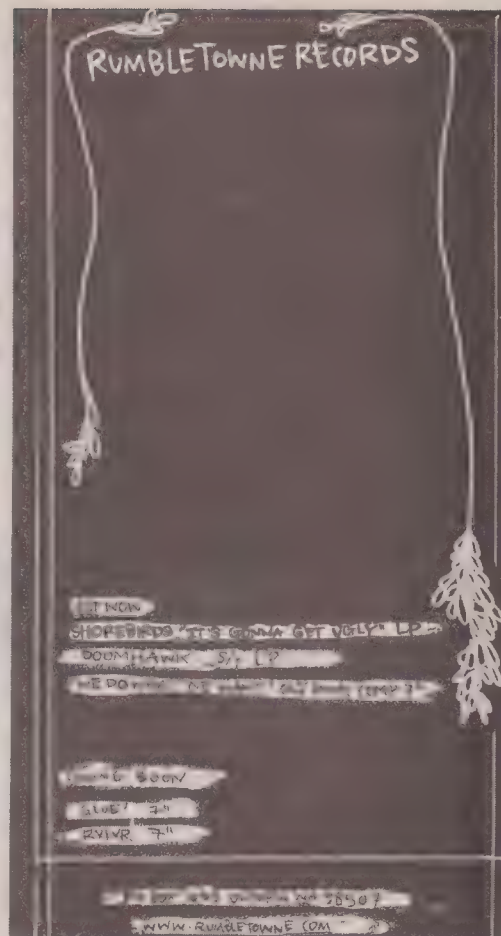
So we rode our bikes to Brighton Beach, the Far Rockaways, and Coney Island on one of the first nice weekends of the summer. Brooklyn turned from gray to brown to green; Broken glass on the shoulder of the roads turned into leaves & twigs. The sky opened up & was no longer punctuated with water towers and rotting decay. The smell of the ocean replaced exhaust and industrial blight.

Even more drastically removed was later that week, when we rode to City Island. A one-mile long island off of the northeast corner of the Bronx, City Island feels like a tiny New England fishing community, albeit one with a skyline on the other side of the water. Time slowed down; we could breathe. We visited the City Island Nautical Museum and asked about a ferry gate that we had seen very aggressively gated off; Turns out that it is a ferry to Hart Island, roughly the same size as City Island, just a short distance across the Long Island Sound. Hart Island is uninhabited, save for the roughly 750,000 unknown dead buried in a massive unmarked cemetery. Hart Island isn't accessible to the general public, but it is my goal to at some point make it over and explore. To me, it's far and away one of the most interesting fucked up & lost avenues of New York history, and I hope to at some point discover & write more about the island's past.

The city - our city, or any city - can hold a lot of secret beauty that is easy to ignore, but if you're willing to dig deeper beyond the monolithic skyscrapers, cracked pavement, and in-vogue neighborhoods, you might find that an escape exists within the city you call home. It's simply a matter of redefinition and rearranging.

Tell me about your city or town. Stephen Pierce, 131 Tompkins Ave 3FL, Brooklyn NY 11206, USA. [stephenhatesyou@gmail.com](mailto:stephenhatesyou@gmail.com)

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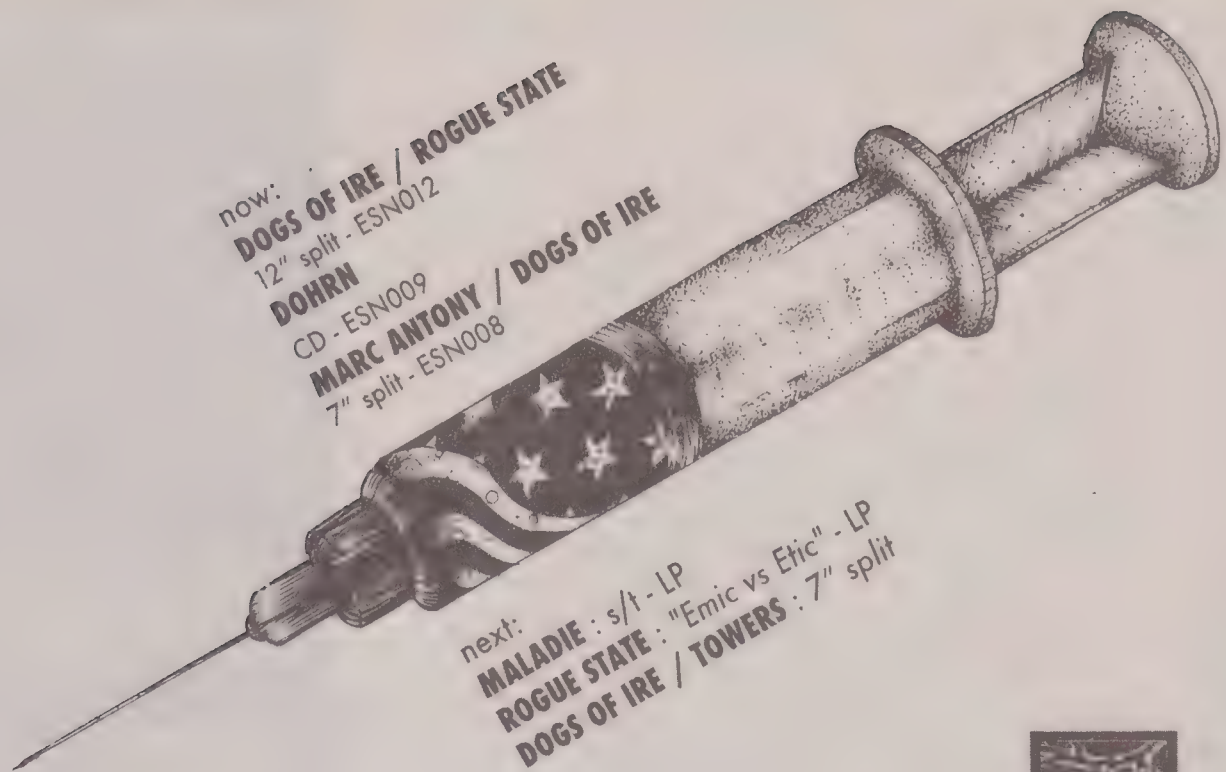
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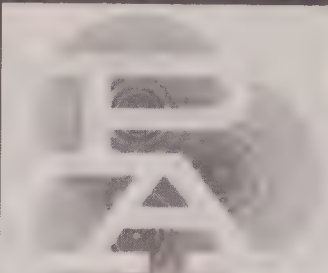
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# PYGMYLUSH

*Pygmy Lush are a band with a split personality. They write songs in two completely different genres which most people refer to simply as their "loud" and "quiet" stuff. Their loud side is noisy and chaotic, screaming punk/hardcore much like you might expect from three core members of the late-nineties screamo band Pg.99—a little more on the punk side with a healthy Born Against influence. Their quiet side is more often compared to Black Heart Procession or Leonard Cohen, with moody arrangements of various acoustic and/or spacey elements and minimal percussion. Sometimes, at their shows,*

*you don't know which side you are going to get and before they start setting up you can almost always hear people asking each other "are they playing loud or quiet?"*

*The band members' personalities themselves often seem equally split. They can be a group of frustrating jackasses and/or sincere sweethearts. Going into this interview, having known most of them for over ten years now, I didn't know which side was going to show up. Katy and I drove about an hour out of the city, out near Dulles airport, to meet them in their hometown suburb of Sterling, VA. We sat down at a Kabob restaurant, where they had recently set up a \$3 show, in the stripmall near where they all grew up, just a few blocks from the Taylor's parents house. I started by asking them if they could give me a brief history of Sterling punk in fifteen words or less and without hesitation, Chris grabbed a napkin off the table and jotted down this:*

STUCK  
BETWEEN  
URBAN  
AND  
SUBURBAN  
WITH  
NOTHING  
TO  
DO  
BUT  
PLAY  
PUNK  
IN  
STERLING  
VA  
FOR  
OUR  
FRIENDS

*Interview by Fil and Katy Otto.  
loud photos by fil.  
quiet photo (opposite) by  
Erik Gamlem.*

Mike Taylor – guitar (ex-Pg.99, Mannequin, Haram)  
Chris Taylor – vocals (ex-Pg.99, Mannequin, Malady)  
Johnny Ward – drums (ex-Pg.99, Malady)  
Widman – guitar (ex-Mannequin)  
Dave – bass

**Fil:** My impression of Sterling is of a suburb with a bunch of strip malls where people still live with their parents...so I'm wondering what do you think keeps people here, what keeps you in Sterling?

**Mike:** If these guys weren't here all of a sudden, I would probably leave. I would go to New Orleans and play with some dudes.

**Johnny:** Yeah, I'd have to say that the band is the biggest reason that we're here.

**Mike:** Though, unlike everybody else who is sick of Sterling, I've actually never wanted to leave. I don't really care. I kind of like it. I don't like Sterling over anything else, I just like this area, probably because of all the friends. It wouldn't be the same without the friends...and the music.

**Widman:** It's an easy place to live.

**Mike:** Plus, we're losers. [laughs]

**Fil:** Do you think your goals and/or motivations for being in a punk band have changed now that some of you are over thirty? As opposed to ten years ago.

**Chris:** We've been in enough punk bands to know that having goals is kind of a moot point really. So now we're at the point where we're a little bit less concerned with goals or motivations and more with just staying a band and playing music. As we get older it seems to be harder and harder to find people who have both the chemistry, friendship,

and you know... musical ability to play with, where you feel comfortable. That's sort of becoming more of a focus I guess. But, I think that was always our focus when we were younger, it's just that we didn't have to think about it. We weren't cerebral or anything. We were just... going. Now it's more like "what do we have to do to not go crazy?"

**Mike:** Yeah, the ambition is different. With all the past, younger bands, it was all still completely new, so you just never knew what was gonna come next, so you just kept doing it and doing it. Now, you kind of know what you're doing; you've been doing it for a while. Before we wanted to do it. Now, we have to do it.

**Katy:** One of the questions I had—and I think it feeds into this, is: what kinds of strategies do you use to make it sustainable for you now?

**Mike:** It's been great since Dave joined the band because I think everybody wants to do the music that we are playing. That strong desire just to do it, alone, makes us want to do it, almost at any cost—sacrifice as much as we can to do it—including spending money that we don't have—which we do every single time we go out on tour. We don't have the money, we just try to figure it out. It's harder, that's the difference between doing it at this age. I did live with my parents for a long time, like the suburban way. During all of Pg.99 I was in my parent's house. So now we have rent, of course, and all sorts of bills, so legitimately to try to make a punk band work these days you have to really want to do it, otherwise you have no business doing it.

**Chris:** The obvious answer to a good question is that we are letting our music span whatever type of genre that we are coming up with. So, the creative input should be under the premise that anything goes. What somebody comes up with creatively is just as valuable as anything else, so everybody has an investment in the band. Everybody has ownership in what comes out of it. And that's part of what sustains an older band, but there's no handbook on it.

**Katy:** What do you think about the change of the landscape of DIY touring?

**Chris:** That's a pretty good question.

**Mike:** I mean, the funny thing is: that's really good, because for a while I thought it had become completely different. With Malady and Haram, those were kind of strange tours. It seemed like empty land out there, like nobody was into it.

**Chris:** Speaking as a Pg.99 member: it was a flurry of activity and energy, and then for it to just suddenly stop, and then, I don't know. I couldn't really feel the same way going around [touring again]. I don't really know what it was like the first time because I was having so much fun, and the second time, I was so miserable that that wasn't a good representation either. So maybe this next time will be the one where I get a good gauge on how the DIY community is going. To me, I've always been simultaneously proud and, you know, disgusted at DIY community throughout the United States.





**Mike:** Our last tour, the US tour we did, was really good actually. That had the most house shows I think we'd ever done on one tour, probably. Right? We played a lot of houses and cafés and DIY spots, less venue/bar stuff, per se. So that was actually really uplifting to see that that was still out there. The tour with Haram was the opposite. I felt it was depressing, completely. It just felt like a disconnection. I was just like: "there's no one left out here." And that's when you feel like you're getting old or something. It's like "am I getting old? Am I not connected anymore? What's happening?" But, for the first time in a long time, with this band, I feel completely connected to the bands we played with.

**Chris:** Let me ask you this: Was that disconnection in *you* or was it in *them*?

**Mike:** Probably a little bit of both! I would say both.

**Chris:** [quietly] That's a good answer. [laughter]

**Mike:** For sure, in Mannequin, when we were playing in Mannequin we were *trying* to disconnect ourselves, but we were having a really good time doing it, and that was a blast. Then came Malady and Haram, I don't know what to say, [to Chris and Johnny] you guys would have to speak on behalf of that.

**Chris:** [quietly mumbling] I got nothing to say about Malady. [giggling]

**Fil:** So, do you feel like you were kind of floating around since Pg.99 until starting this band.

**Chris:** I think that if someone thought that, from an outside perspective, I would totally understand, but I don't really necessarily feel like I'm "floating around."

**Mike:** Well, you're still doing what you want to do and really you're just trying... like Haram, I loved playing with Haram, I loved playing with those guys, but there was always such a frustration with the

music. It was like a musical thing that was *not* satisfying in that band... but it was one of the best times that I've had in a while, just writing, hanging and writing. It was a good relationship. I don't know, each band is completely different. I'd say this is the most well rounded, satisfying band that I've been in, ever actually, easily, with everything.

**Chris:** [quietly mumbling something that sounded like: smmmrkn mrrrd?]

**Fil:** What did you say?

**Chris:** [quietly] Smokin' weed? [laughter]

**Mike:** This is definitely the most weed heavy band that I've ever been in for sure. I'm thinkin' I'm gonna have to start smoking weed on this tour coming up, for sure.

**Chris:** I'm quitting.

[more laughter]

**Johnny:** But I don't know what the hell was going on when I was in Malady really.

**Mike:** He can't even remember it.

**Johnny:** That's for a bunch of reasons.

**Fil:** I can testify to that.

**Mike:** Yeah, you tell us, then. It'd be good to hear...

**Chris:** You're asking that question because that's what *you* think. So why don't you help us with that answer. Have we been "floating around" since Pg.99 broke up?

**Katy:** [sounding like *she's* stoned now] I wish people were literally floating around.

**Fil:** I think that the outside perspective was definitely that, at the beginning, after Pg.99, people were [excitedly] like "oh, an ex-Pg.99 band" and then when those bands didn't sound the way they wanted them to, they started to feel burned.

**Chris:** Did you feel burned?

**Katy:** I liked Malady...

**Johnny:** I did too, it just never really...

**Chris:** No, wait, hold on, I just want you to explain that.

**Fil:** I liked those bands, but I am also friends with you all, so...

**Johnny:** Ouch!

**Chris:** But you felt... you're burned? What do you think?

**Johnny:** Well there were a shit load of people in Pg.99...

**Mike:** Do you think people had higher expectations of us?

**Fil:** What I thought initially was that you all were trying so hard to get away from Pg.99—which is what came naturally and what you were really good at—that you were trying things that were... different, which clashed with the audiences expectations.

**Chris:** The thing about it is: where does the musician's right to be creative end and the audience's right to demand that they stay true to themselves begin? Or whatever. And: why do I have to 'burn' people because something, that I've been doing for a long time, doesn't fit, like it's a too tight shirt or something. Why does it have to hurt somebody? ...because I didn't want that, but I felt that resentment a little bit.

**Fil:** ...but what responsibility do you have to that audience anyway?

**Chris:** Well, that's what I'm asking. But 'burned'? I would just like to say that I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. [laughter]

**Mike:** Mannequin meant to hurt everybody's feelings.



**Fil:** I think the funny thing about that is that the people who are complaining about your other bands not sounding enough like Pg.99, now that you're getting back to playing that kind of music again, they're probably long gone.

**Johnny:** And that's kind of typical...

**Chris:** When bands revisit their "rockin'" side when they're like in their mid-thirties and everyone else is at the party down the street where some two-piece with a wig and a clown mask is freaking out.

**Katy:** What band is that?

**Mike:** Sounds like every band on the face of the planet.

**Katy:** What do you think of the concept of role models within independent music?

**Mike:** I think that's up to the person who's idolizing... it's up to that person who's listening to the music... that's their responsibility.

**Katy:** Well, I think it's kind of interesting with punk/DIY music because there are a lot of spaces where there are a lot of young people that are socializing and doing all this stuff in this certain way... at the same time, the argument made is that it's not anyone's responsibility—what is happening with people who might look up to them—but at the same time it's rooted in community.

**Mike:** I think it's hard sometimes for a band to understand where it stands with other people, too. As far as the role model things and the things that we say in our lyrics and what we do when we're playing on stage or what we say in an interview or something. It's easier just to understand that they like our band. It's easier for them to understand if they like our band or not, then whether or not they are listening to what we're saying, reading the lyrics or...

**Chris:** ...or [whether they] like us as people. I guess there's a little part that *wants* to be disconnected from that...

**Johnny:** Yeah, because that becomes really scary and a lot of responsibility. I don't know that I would want to project a negative song. That's something that we've approached a little bit, at least with me and Chris, trying to figure out how to write a positive song.



**Chris:** Just because there's a little bit of that responsibility. So it throws itself in there whether you want to be totally isolated or not. You keep it in mind, and try not to think about it too much, where it messes up whatever you're doing that got you... that got people interested in the first place.

**Fil:** I wanted to ask you a question, Chris, which is that: you've been a vocalist for well over ten years now, you've written tons of songs and played tons of shows, and when you perform you seem to emote a great deal of passion for your songs, and yet I've noticed that at Pygmy Lush shows, there's sometimes an eerie, somewhat uncomfortable silence in between songs. I just wonder at those times what's going on in your head, because it doesn't seem like you've run out of things to say or that you're shy. Do you just stop wanting to express what you are thinking to the audience or communicate with them?

**Chris:** That's a great question and I'm prepared to answer it, now, probably better than I would've been a couple weeks ago. I think part of it connects to some of the things we were talking about earlier, what I'm so scared of with ego, dedicating myself to not getting caught up in that, followed with not really wanting to take ownership for the music that we write or my part in it. So there's something going on in my head, between a song, that's just not proud, so the applause seems a little bit unwarranted... but that's gonna change, I think that's sort of not a great thing, I'm not over-thinking anything... and a lot of times I'm really nervous, especially with the quiet stuff, I get pretty nervous. Another thing is that before our shows I'll usually sit down with like Richie or somebody and talk their ass off. So I feel weird if I say the same thing up there on the stage that I just talked somebody's ass off about, but it's really something that's been going on in my life that I could share with everybody if I hadn't just given it out. I feel like if I repeated that it would just feel weird for me.

**Johnny:** I definitely still get nervous for shows, probably more than I did a few years ago. It doesn't really seem to go away with how many you play, at least personally.

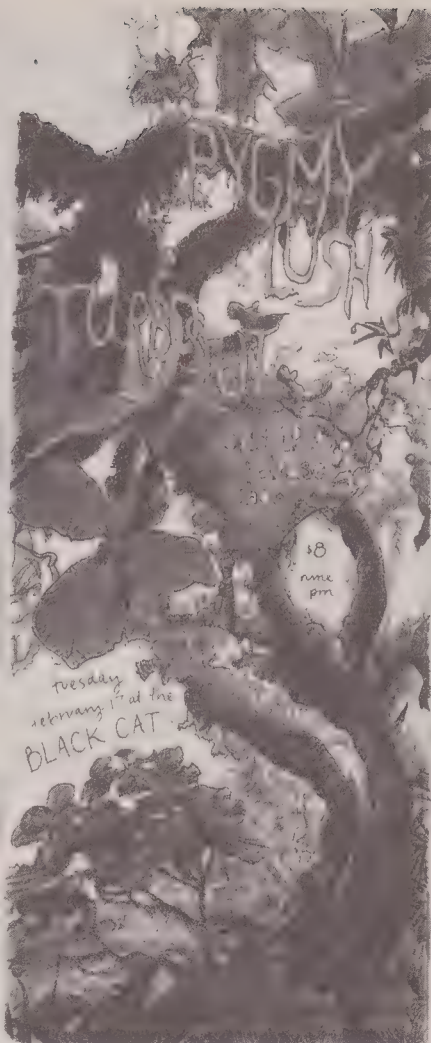
**Fil:** [shuffling through notes]

**Chris:** How many questions are going "nope... nope..."

**Johnny:** "What's your favorite color... eh... that's not too good."

**Mike:** It's just crossed out. "Who's your favorite..."

**Johnny:** "...favorite Power Ranger..."



**Mike:** "Transformers or GoBots?"

**Fil:** I don't know how appropriate some of these questions are now.

**Mike:** Bring those! You can't just do that.

**Widman:** That's illegal.

**Fil:** Well, I know that you all seem pretty comfortable admitting that you rip off Born Against occasionally in your loud stuff, so I was wondering who you think you rip off in your quiet stuff.

**Mike:** I'll let Johnny and Chris take a lot of the reigns on this one.

**Chris:** First of all, I just think that "rip off" is a heavy-duty word.

**Johnny:** It's two words. Two brutal words.

**Fil:** I'm just trying to get around the boring "influences" question.

**Chris:** Yeah, yeah.

**Katy:** "Give a nod to" is a nicer way of saying "rip off."

**Johnny:** I would say Tom Waits is the biggest... but that's like hardly ever.

**Fil:** I'm just talking about major influences.

**Chris:** I like PJ Harvey.

**Katy:** [whispering] Fuck yeah.

**Chris:** My biggest vocalist influences are PJ Harvey, Kurt Cobain, Tom Waits...

**Mike:** Sam McPheeters, David Yow.

**Chris:** Sam McPheeters and David Yow—for the loud stuff, but for the quiet stuff: Pinback, Three Mile Pilot—any of those groups, Neil Young, anybody that sings like Neil Young, Flaming Lips.

**Katy:** No Sheryl Crow?

**Chris:** No Sheryl Crow. I really like Kate Bush.

**Katy:** [starts singing what I assume is a Kate Bush song]

**Chris:** That's a good song. [sings more, in falsetto]

**Mike:** I think with each of us with the quiet stuff we definitely individually put our own inspirations on it. Like, Johnny will come with a simple folk song.

**Johnny:** Yeah, as far as my own personal [inspirations] I would say: Townes Van Zandt and Bruce Springsteen are some of my biggest. You know, I just like old folk, but those kind of get swirled up, you know, as far as... I don't know what your actual question was.

**Fil:** I guess my question is: What are the things that inspired this band's split personality, that made you want to do the quiet stuff as opposed to just the loud stuff.

**Mike:** I think the fact that we've been listening to that stuff for so long and never had the opportunity to play it—or maybe the courage to try it until now. We've had those influences all our lives; some of those same bands are the influence in the loud stuff as well as the quiet stuff, and some of that loud music goes into the influence of the quiet. Like belting out some loud vocals... It goes through a filter, everybody has a part—each of us—that we all play in each of those songs and then eventually it becomes a Pygmy Lush song. Especially with the brand new songs that we've been writing where Johnny will take something and we will restructure it, take it apart, put it back together until it's something completely different. On the new one we have Johnny—this song he brought on acoustic guitar—now he's playing the glockenspiel and vocals, Dave moves to keyboard, Mike moves to bass and we just play three notes—it's completely different from what it was when it started. So I think we have a filter for it now.

**Chris:** As far as "rip off" goes: we've tried so hard to rip off our favorite bands, but every time, when it hits the ground, after it's done, it doesn't look anything like those bands.

**Mike:** ...minus the Born Against riffs...

**Chris:** Yeah, and he's had years to work on that.





**Mike:** I'm still working on that. Give me another two records and I got that shit.

**Fil:** Is it true that you set up a show in Sterling specifically so that your parents could come see you play?

**Chris:** Yeah, but they didn't come.

**Fil:** They didn't show up?

**Mike:** No, they didn't show up.

**Chris:** Not ours.

**Mike:** Everyone else's did.

**Johnny:** Yeah, that's kind of funny, that our parents have really swung around on our music. That's one of the big differences with the quiet stuff.

**Mike:** That's us getting old.

**Chris:** You know what Bukowski says: As soon as your parents start liking your shit you know it's trash—it's fucking shit.

**Katy:** Did he really say that?

**Chris:** Yeah, he said that if your parents like your poetry then you're a bad poet.

**Mike:** And the moms at work, man, she'll be telling people about how good our shit is and it's so weird. So then all the people from my work, they were over there in the corner and didn't know that we were playing the loud stuff.

**Chris:** Oh, really?

**Johnny:** They're like "man, Marion is crazy."

**Chris:** "She really gets it. She's down with it."

**Mike:** But that's the people that need to see it. So if we can pull that off over and over again, if we can get the people who like our punk music to come see the quiet stuff and the people who like the quiet stuff to come see the punk music—fool 'em both, trick 'em a little bit—that would be great!

[pause]

**Chris:** Do you dye your hair, Katy?

**Katy:** We do NOT talk about *Fight Club*. But I will tell you—this is not going on the interview—I will tell you this: if somebody has this hair color and they're not an albino and they're past the age of 28, they do get highlights. Yes, I do.

**Chris:** Okay.

**Katy:** I just call it "a little reinforcement."

**Chris:** Okay. That's cool. What, are you getting a little grey?

**Katy:** I DON'T have grey hair!

**Mike:** You should let the greys come in, Katy.

**Katy:** What is going on in this interview? Jesus Christ!

**Johnny:** There's nothing wrong with grey hair.

**Mike:** It's a mark of wisdom.

**Katy:** Well, I don't have any.

**Chris:** I'd be proud of it.

**Mike:** I'd love greys.

**Johnny:** There's nothing like a good looking guy with grey hair. ...or a good looking girl with grey hair.

**Katy:** Yeah, thanks.



**Widman:** But as far as the show is concerned. It was a great show. [laughter]

**Fil:** I think the idea sounded cool to me because it seems like, for over ten years, you've been trying to set up weird shows in Sterling and have them be as cheap as possible.

**Mike:** Yeah, it's still the same. As far as setting up any shows in Sterling, I always want them to be the same: you have to put in a lot of hard work to personally tell people about the show and make it cheap so more people come out.

**Widman:** You have to put flyers up at Safeway and Giant [two major supermarkets.]

**Katy:** Does that really work?

**Chris:** Try flyering suburbia.

**Widman:** Walk around looking for kids with skateboards.

**Mike:** That's the thing; it's tricky. I mean, we went all the way out to Falls Church, and I flyered Baltimore, but I didn't actually flyer DC.

**Widman:** I drove around Leesburg for an afternoon just looking for skaters.

**Katy:** That's awesome!

**Widman:** That's all I could do. I put one up at the movie theater.

**Mike:** Yeah, if we see, like, punk kids... I mean we still see NOFX patches safety pinned on black hoodies and that dude will get a flyer.

**Katy:** The last time I tried to physically flyer was one of the most soul-destroying experiences of my life, it was like a mixture of people throwing it away immediately as soon as it touched their hand, one girl screaming at me to stop touching her, and a man telling me he was my "Facebook friend" who looked like my father. I said "I got rid of that shit a while ago, dude, I don't know what you're talking about."

**Widman:** I tried to give a flyer to this one guy, he was definitely wearing a punk shirt, I don't remember what shirt, but it was definitely punk and old. He was definitely a punk. I was walking out of the bank and then I was like "I got a flyer for this guy" so I said "Hey man, you want a flyer for a show? It's, uh, this weekend." And then he was just like "No." And then I was like "It's a really killer punk show, man, it's gonna be awesome." And he's just like "NO!" And I was like "alright?"

**Chris:** What about the guy you like followed through a parking garage?

**Mike:** You gotta do it. I'd feel like a bum if I didn't do it.

**Katy:** You could flyer the most important person in your life. You don't know yet.

**Mike:** Yeah, you just don't know.

**Johnny:** You could give one to God.

**Mike:** He might not show up, though.

**Chris:** [singing exaggeratedly] "what if God was one of us?"

**Katy:** That's Joan Osborne, yo.

**Fil:** OK, one last question. Is it true that at least one of you voted for George Bush twice!?

**Widman:** Yes, I did! And you know what? If he could run again, I'd vote for him again.

**Chris:** Tell 'em why, Widman.

**Widman:** Because I think he's a good guy and I would like to hangout with him one day. [in a quieter, ambiguously sarcastic tone] ...and also, I really like his foreign policy and uh... [laughter]...what? I do.

**Chris:** Tell 'em the real reason why.

**Widman:** I mean, I just think he's a funny guy...[laughing] and I think that the country really needed him. Honestly, I think he was perfect.

**Fil:** Was it a reactionary thing, to piss-off punk types?

**Mike:** I've always thought a little bit of that was in you.

**Widman:** No, that's definitely not it at all.

**Mike:** ...to oppose everybody else.

**Widman:** I know that you *think* that, but that's definitely not why.

**Mike:** Well, maybe not for that in particular, but for many things, you definitely oppose just to oppose. For sure.

**Chris:** [To Mike] That sounds familiar.

**Mike:** [back to Chris] Hey, you know what? Guilty as charged!

**Johnny:** And then in the last election, he voted for Obama...

**Mike:** Tell 'em why, Widman.

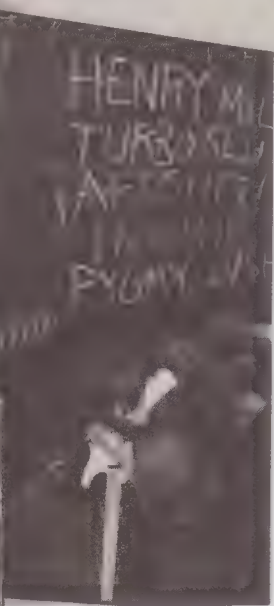
**Johnny:** Because of a little transaction. [laughter]

**Widman:** We don't need to discuss that kind of stuff.

**Johnny:** Let's just say it's worth about \$400 on the street.

[laughter]

ALL QUESTIONS





# NEXT VICTIM

In 2005, when a former band of mine toured Europe, we played in Poznan, Poland with a band called Mind Pollution. They made an immediate impression. Their songs were both powerful and dynamic, and their singer, Gosia, had a presence like nothing I'd seen since Abuse Sonora. We stayed with some of them that night, and their dog Crusty stole my shoes. Shortly after we got back home to the US, they sent us a copy of their CD, "Spalone Dusze"—and it was amazing! It is carefully layered songwriting with every instrument playing a distinct role, the dark atmosphere that I love in the best crust music, and stunningly emotional vocals. Most of my favorite singers in hardcore punk are women; perhaps this is because the social construction of male gender discourages men from venturing outside certain parameters in their vocal expression. (Despite his homophobia, HR from Bad Brains would be an exception to this rule—in maybe's straight white men in particular.) Women who are not afraid to use their voices to make both ugly and beautiful sounds—such as Diamanda Galas, or the singer of Contropiece—often push past the boundaries to make the most fearless and compelling music.

Mind Pollution eventually went on commission with the departure of their guitarist, but the remaining members formed Next Victim, and last year Gosia sent me their CD, "The Cold Gust of Wind." At this point in my life, having been involved in punk since the 1980s and having played something like 1000 shows, I have to admit it's difficult for me to find new bands that deeply move me. But I'm as excited about Next Victim as I was when I discovered Minor Threat and later His Hero Is Gone, and I'm eager for everyone in the US who has never heard of them to check them out.

Interview by Brian; translations by Jos Agdion

The music and lyrics of Next Victim are more "expressive" than political. Is there a way in which your band still takes a politicized approach to making music, i.e., by maintaining a DIY ethic or choosing where to play shows? Do you think there is still a future for punk as a radical force? On the other hand, do you think it compromises the artistic value of music to use it to make political statements?

Sebo: Yes, it's true. The Next Victim lyrics and music are more expressive and personal. Both have roots in politics and our bands' opinions. In our lyrics we tackle subjects linked with consumerism and squatting, which are punk music-related, but also these that are rarely dealt with or never at all in punk groups' lyrics, e.g. rapes, emotions after loss of the closest

people, etc. You know, our news haven't

that much since Mind Pollution, we still perform and create on a DIY stage, which

is where we originate from really and feel best. We love performing in various independent cultural spots, where we can support initiatives, at squats; we still belong to that world. Our band is closely linked to the squat Rozbrat based in Poznan, whose parts belong to either the community or anarchist federation. I truly believe that there is a future for radical punk music in the world. So many things happen which we watch on television, read about in newspapers that piss us off and act as the driving force behind what we do as a punk band. This mechanism won't ever stop working; there always will be someone to stand up to. This is what the punk movement is all about. But coming back to the question of whether expressing political views has an influence on the artistic value of the music—I think it does, and, to be honest, quite considerably so. Let's take Next Victim as an example. Currently, the band comprises six people. Although we have the same background, we significantly differ as far as some matters are concerned. We often discuss various subjects about which we can't settle. Nevertheless, one thing is certain, what we sing about and talk about on stage comes from the unified view; there is a common denominator in ourselves. Just imagine that we start to campaign from the stage to give up smoking and drinking. The part of the audience active in the sXe movement would love it, the rest would be appalled. So, to my mind, expressing specific political ideas destroys musical vision. We can always talk about political matters while having a drink after a gig. Even so, I have to admit that I'm fond of punk groups with a political message.

Gosia: As far as lyrics go, Mind Pollution was supposed to have a six-month break, which is why we started Next Victim. Personally, I really wanted for the lyrics to be women's issues related. The first lyrics that I ever wrote in Next Victim have our band's name and tell what happens in the mind of a rape victim. Let's remember that men happen to be raped as well, not to mention kids of both sexes. After I wrote another song with "pro-female" lyrics about the feelings of a woman who loses a child, I came to the conclusion that I had to go in a different direction with my lyrics. I don't want to shut myself off to other matters because it's simply impossible. Not in the reality we live in. Anyway, you could see by people's reactions during gigs how difficult the

subjects of the songs were for some of them, even for those who like hardcore music as well as lyrics. However, if you add a difficult lyric about things people don't want to think or talk about, then it's hard to stay indifferent. Some people would leave when I shouted from the stage, "What does a woman feel when she loses her child?" That's why every next lyric is more general so to speak. The lyrics to one song are about squats and what reality it is to live in one, and what is done to overcome stereotypes. It does touch upon politics. We don't talk directly about Bieslan' or capitalistic exploitation like we did in Mind Pollution, but you never know where we will end up as far as lyrics go.

**What is your connection to the squatting movement in Poznan? What is happening in that movement right now?**

Sebo: Like I said before, Next Victim is closely linked to the Rozbrat squat that has been thriving for 14 years in Poznan. Together with Gosia, we have been organizing DIY gigs for bands from all over the world. Our guitarist Michal works in the anarchist federation and the Rozbrat collective. Some of us rehearse there for other projects. We strive to participate in the life of this place—it's difficult to judge how efficiently. One of the recent events there that bears a huge importance personally for me and Gosia was our wedding that took place in "The Limping Mule," a pub on the squat premises.

Gosia: As far as Rozbrat is concerned, I lived there for a year and a half and was able to see what happens there and how it works. At that time I helped to organize Food Not Bombs.

**What is happening with this movement now?**

Sebo: [The Rozbrat squat] has been working fine for 14 years. On its premises can be found the Anarchist Federation, Anarchist Black Cross, Food Not Bombs, and Critical Mass. Brochures, magazines, and leaflets are published, gigs are thrown, exhibitions and festivals organized as well as other undertakings, e.g., film dinners are given. About 20 people live there. The latest news is that the land under the squat has been taken to auction, so we don't know how long this place is going to last. This land is extremely valuable for the city authorities due to the fact that it is vast and located in the



On September 1, 2004, Russian special troops attacked Chechen separatists who had seized a school in Bieslan, Northern Ossetia and taken 1127 hostages—mainly children. In the assault, 316 hostages were killed, including 186 children.



city centre. I hope that, if the day comes when bulldozers arrive to tear the squat down, we will stand up to fight for it.

**Gosia:** Since Rozbrat was in danger of being pulled down more people have been engaged in sorting out help for Rozbrat. Regular gigs are given as a part of initiative "ROZBRAT STAYS".

**As a Polish hardcore band, which bands do you look back to as part of your local punk heritage?**

**Sebo:** I took to punk in 1988, at the time when communism reigned in Poland and access to punk records from the world or even Western Europe was practically impossible. Bands like Siekiera, Dezerter, Moskwa, Armia, Abbadon have exerted the biggest influence on me. They brought me up to be a punk. Besides that, the person who had an immense bearing on my growing into punk was my 7-years-older brother. It was he who introduced me to Dezerter, awoke interest in certain matters, and bought the first guitar.

**What qualities do you think distinguish Polish and Eastern European punk music? For example, it seems to me that the bass guitar has been more independent and important in punk bands from Eastern Europe such as Dezerter, Włochaty, and Kriticcka Situace, and the same goes for melodic vocals. Do you think any aspects of your approach to playing music are drawn from a "tradition" of Eastern European punk?**

**Sebo:** You know, those bands you mentioned, namely Włochaty and Dezerter, have more discernible bass guitar in their music with more melodic lead vocal. But is it the style of Eastern Europe punk bands? I wouldn't agree with that statement. In the music of bands like Siekiera, Moskwa, Abbadon, Discharge influences can be distinguished, which is maximally punk and sharp.

Going back to that distinct bass in Eastern European punk music, maybe in the 80s it was a characteristic feature for bands from that world region, but after the Berlin Wall fell everything has changed. Various groups were brought to life whose music influences came from bands across the ocean or from Western Europe, to mention but a few: Apatia, Inkwizycja, and Homomilitia. One last thing I'd like to add to what has been mentioned about the bass back in the 80s. I heard that Polish and Eastern European punk groups had that distinct heavy sound due to the fact that it was virtually impossible to buy a good guitar amplifier;

the bass ones were believed to be fairly okay. Maybe there's something in it?

In our music, I'm talking about Next Victim here, traditional punk motifs can't be heard. There are sludge/crust influences that belong to the punk movement. I think that we might resemble bands like Dimlaia, Damad, Neurosis or even those more crust-core like Nausea and His Hero Is Gone; of course I'm talking here about the slow music parts, since Next Victim is mainly about slow sound.

**How do you think the origins of Polish punk, which first appeared under Communist rule, have made it different from punk from Western Europe and the US? How is this changing now that the whole world is "united" under capitalism?**

**Sebo:** Communism was a period of poverty, a constant lack of food in shops, empty shelves and endless queues. Those are the images fixed in my memory. I started my punk career in that period but I don't want to talk about it since, to be honest, I was too young to understand certain things. I only remember militia, security and safety department control, omnipresent censorship. Even punk records had to be censored. Some facts became known years after communism was gone; e.g. Jarocin Music Festival, where famous Polish punk groups performed, was manipulated by the communistic authorities back then. I think that punks struggled with authorities at that time and there is no comparison between punks from USA or Western Europe, whose lives were much less complicated.

I'd like to mention a few situations that I found myself in and experienced communistic regime. Mind Pollution together with Silence went on a tour across Ukraine, Belarus, and Latvia. A totalitarian regime is in charge in Belarus. What we were through whilst on the tour might be called madness. Armed forces with Kalashnikovs at gigs, KGB agents jotting down every forbidden word; empty shelves in shops; we were denied petrol at the garage, people there were too scared to sell us anything. It resembled what we underwent not so long ago in Poland. Our Belarusian friend who helped to organize that tour was sacked from work without a reason—the reason was known of course, he shouldn't have helped us. We Poles are considered a danger to Belarus, according to the country's establishment—insanity. We learned a lot from the locals, e.g. about mysterious abductions of people making an underground paper, repressions, etc.

In the era of united capitalism, the

punk movement has not changed significantly. Maybe keeping in touch with other punks has become easier, we can have a chat about specific matters, exchange necessary contacts, opinions, organize a tour for a band, etc.

**Gosia, you are one of the most creative, expressive singers I have heard since Diamanda Galas, or maybe Victoria from Damad. What singers (punk or not) do you take inspiration from?**

**Gosia:** Thank you for your comparison. The singers that have had the biggest effect on my style of singing are Björk and Jarboe. I have learnt from Björk to cross boundaries of expressing emotions, not to fear sounds that want to see daylight. Jarboe in turn represents power, magic, and darkness to me. She masterfully creates a different dimension, theatrical sounds so to speak. She recites, whispers, and seeks new tones in her voice. I try to follow this path, put aside inhibitions, and search for more. I always aim at throwing a vocal trinket in a song, which is supposed to individualize a track. Björk and Jarboe are two singers that I look up to. I managed to shake hands with Jarboe and say thank you. Unfortunately I think I won't be able to do the same with Björk and thank her for all the lessons she has taught me so far.

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<http://www.rozbrat.org/english.htm>



Photos courtesy of Sebastian Wojcik



# KIMYA DAWSON

*Kimya Dawson has been doing her thing for something like ten years now: awkward yet approachable, beautiful acoustic songs that touch on heavy issues like alcoholism and suicide, but still keep it light interspersin fart jokes and whimsical anecdotes, and always reinforcing her mantra - "remember that i love you." Since early on she's been exposed to mainstream audiences, having toured with The Strokes with her old band The Moldy Peaches, and Third Eye Blind solo. but no matter who she's played to she's always done everything on her own terms, and when her inadvertent flirtations with the spotlight have passed she's been back playing in living rooms and sleeping on couches. In April 2008 i was privileged enough to hop in the van for a few days on tour with her, her husband Angelo Spencer, and their then one and a half year old daughter Panda. earlier in the year five of her songs had been featured on a #1 best selling soundtrack for the movie Juno. We talked about how she's still been able to do everything on her own terms in light of her recent run-in with the mainstream, and how the new experience of motherhood has effected things.*

*Interview by Spoonboy, Photo by Rhett Nelson, Illustrations by Caitlin Girlcave*

**Okay. How has it been going on tour with Panda?**

It's really fun and really amazing and really hard. There are times when she doesn't like it. There are times when she's having a lot of fun. When she's grumpy I have to remind myself that when we're home she's more grumpy because she gets really restless. Things are pretty tedious when we're home. Especially the past many months of rain in Olympia, and all of us getting cabin fever. When we're out and about, we have more adventures. We find new parks all the time and meet new people and she's really into that.

**I thought it was awesome how when people were challenging decisions you were making about your music career, and they'd say "don't you wanna have a good life for you daughter," but you'd be like "she has the best life ever."**

Oh yeah! I definitely have gotten a few e-mails here and there from people telling me I need to make more money so that she can have "a good life." I just recently got e-mail from a woman telling me to stop dragging her around to shows, "That's no life for a baby." If the shows were more "typical," that could be true, but we do our best to make things really comfortable

and safe for her. She's meeting diverse people, being in really diverse environments, and she's being exposed to diverse cultures. Plus lots of music and art and people who appreciate music and art. I think that's way better than the stability of sitting home all day in a house. That sort of repetition and monotony of the pretty boring white town that we live in, which has cool people in it, but you know.

**Which town?**

Olympia, Washington. There are a lot of cool people in that town, but it's not a racially diverse town.

**Have you been involved with any radical parenting communities? Or has there been anything in particular that's shaped how you've approached parenting?**

I don't know. My parents weren't straight up radicals, but they really believed in protecting us and keeping us safe and then supporting us through whatever decisions we made about where we wanted to go with our lives and who we were as people. I think that had a pretty profound effect on me recognizing that my kid is not me. She's gonna always be her. I can be a role model for her, and tell her things that I think are important about kindness and community, but she's always going to just be herself and make her own choices. It's my job to love her and protect her. As far as other radical parenting practices go, like cloth diapering, and extended breast-feeding, and co-sleeping and all that, it's all stuff that always made common sense to me. Well, cloth diapering—not so much. I met a lot of people who were doing that within my circles of friends. A lot of my friends all had babies right before Panda was born. We were all talking about diapers and how we were really turned off by the idea of disposables, the chemicals in them, the waste, and all the water that goes into creating them. We were all talking about diaper services and figuring out what the best alternative to disposable diapers was. I became a part of a natural family message board and attachment parenting message board called Mothering. It's the message board for Mothering magazine. I learned a lot about diapering and co-sleeping and gentle or non-discipline. And a lot of those parents that I've met, on the internet at least, are maybe radical in those ways, but more mainstream seeming people who just happen to cloth-diaper and breast-feed and all of those things. It's neat to see that those practices are becoming a little bit more widespread, like natural childbirth and natural medicine for kids.

**Can you explain gentle or non-discipline?**

Yeah. I haven't gotten too deep into that yet because Panda's still really young and we don't really discipline her at all. There's a lot of redirection. If she's in a situation that seems dangerous, we'll steer her away from that by

distracting her rather than being like "NOOO!!!" For us a big part of it is trying to not have her in environments where we'll have to tell her "no" all the time. It's really important to give her the freedom to explore. A big part of gentle discipline is to recognize what the kid is going through when they're acting out and to sit with them and hold them and talk to them and breath with them and allow them to experience that outburst and not to shame them or ostracize them or yell at them. You want to hear them and work them through it and love them and cuddle them while they're dealing with it. Gentle discipline isn't whipping your kid with a feather! Or like a felt belt. [Laughs]

**I understood that! So with harsher discipline the child isn't able to process what they're going through, it just becomes this repressed thing that could come up later in life.**

Yeah. You've got to let them have their feelings, but love them regardless.

**Do you find that on tour you can find the types of spaces where Panda will be safe to explore? Spaces where you don't have to tell her "no"?**

That's part of the reason we stay in hotels a lot of the time, if there aren't people we know and we know that they know what sort of environment a baby needs to be in. We've been staying in hotels on this tour, which is pretty unusual for me to be in hotels all the time. But in a hotel the most I've ever had to do is to steer her away from sticking her finger in the socket. Or maybe "no splashing in the toilet." When we're at other people's homes there are usually a whole lot of things she can get into that I might be okay with her getting into under normal circumstances but maybe they wouldn't want her to play with. Or if there are little things that might be unsafe for her, if we have to constantly be like "don't touch that, don't touch that!" That's really stressful for me and for her.

**Have you gotten flack from DIY purists about how you've tried to make comfortable spaces for Panda?**

I got a Myspace message from some show space in Williamsburg a couple days ago. I forget what it's called, but they were telling me that I was crazy and I needed to "chill out." It was really vague and they didn't go into it, so I just wrpte back "why am I crazy?" I had blogged about how I'd felt like my space was violated at a show, because I needed the green room to be private and it wasn't. I got the impression that they thought that was some





diva talk. Like (prissy voice) "I need a clean private green room!" People who don't have kids don't understand that I really couldn't go into a totally packed warehouse space with her. At smaller house shows with her, when it's not totally mellow or clean, I can't hold her all night. That's imprisoning her in my arms. There needs to be enough space for her to walk around in the room. Or there needs to be a room where, if she gets sleepy, I can sit with her and nurse her quietly. She gets over stimulated. She's a baby. But I guess some people think it's bullshit to stay in hotels and have a reliable vehicle.

[Laughs] Or to ask for a green room but I think it's bullshit to get totally wasted and trash somebody's house. We all have our ways that we do things that make us comfortable. If people wanna do things their way, they can, and I'll do things my way. And there are enough people who understand and respect me that I don't care if a few self-proclaimed punks give

me a hard time about it. [Laughs]

**Has putting yourself out there as a mother, by talking about your kid on stage, and writing children's songs, put you in a position to inspire younger girls to have a more positive feminist example of motherhood?**

I've gotten a lot of e-mails from girls who are like "Wow! You can be a mom and be a strong woman! You can do what you want, and not just be stuck at home taking care of a kid. You can go out and like... live!" It's hard at the same time, because I also want people to be responsible parents and make sure that they know how to protect and provide for their kid. I don't want people to run off and not be able to feed their kid.

**You put a lot of work into it.**

Yeah. I do what I do, but it's really hard work. People have to understand that you can do it, but you still have to bust your ass. You have to really be able to take care of your family and remember that this child is the most important thing. Yeah, I'm having fun, but if the kid's safety gets compromised I will fucking leave, and I don't care who I make mad. Even if it's me! Even if I'm like "Oh I wanted to go here today," but if she's grumpy, I need to make it not about me and what I wanted to do.

**Do you want to talk at all about how since you've had your songs in that big movie it's affected the type of exposure you've gotten and how you've chosen to deal with it? What kind of ways has that been a cool opportunity?**

There's definitely a lot more people who know who I am...and I just try to ignore it. [Laughs] I've never cared how many people know who I am, and I've never cared how many people I play for. But it's cool; I'm glad that so many people are connecting with what I do. It's nice if they can get something out of it, but it's awkward when they're weird to me. I try to let people know that they can act normal around me and treat me like a normal person.

**It seems like people react positively to songs like the body hair song. There are people who are hearing these ideas who maybe never thought of them before.**

It's true. It's been making me really happy to play some songs like that, about how you can just be who you are and be as you are and not feel like you have to conform to the modern American beauty standard. To just straight up say "Eh. Whatcha gonna do about it? I've got hairy legs. Big deal! I don't care!" It's not like a serious issue to address like (sternly) "HAIRY LEGS." But at the same time it is, because I'm sure most girls in this country don't even consider it an option to not shave their legs. And what is this standard based on? I was talking to my friends Jeremy and Tanner last night and we were like "Is that because men want women to look like little girls? To look like naked hairless little babies?" It's so sick. So we're just like "I HAVE HAIRY PITS!! I AM WOMAN!! I AM A GROWN UP WOMAN!" That's what your hair can represent—your womanhood. And that's being stripped from you. You have to have no age and no maturity even though that's how your body develops to be. If you actually genuinely prefer to not have hair on your body, then that's fine! I shave my head sometimes because I just feel like it. But if you feel like you're just shaving because you would be embarrassed to not do it, but you hate shaving, then that's sad. I feel like part of the problem with this...universe is that people have separated themselves from the animal kingdom in their minds. I think it's really important to remember that we're creatures. That we're beautiful creatures and we are a part of the whole thing. We're not superior beings.

**You were telling me last time you were in town about how you had chosen to put a video on AOL's website because it said "Fuck Bush and fuck this war" in it. Is that something you've been trying to do more?**

I haven't been actively trying to get on websites or radio stations that are huge so I can get my message across. But I have accepted some offers like that for radio interviews or whatever because I know that it's an important platform maybe. I think it's important to be able to say things to a wider audience. I've been singing the same songs to the same kids for a long time. I think it's good to say the same ideas to some people who maybe hadn't thought about those ideas before. It's not like I'm in cahoots with AOL.

**I just meant, when those things have come up have you been**

**able to use them to say something that might not otherwise get heard?**

Yeah. I'm not going so far as to be involved with anything like Clear Channel radio or Live Nation or anything like that and the AOL thing was totally an accident because they told me it was spinner.com and I didn't know who owned it until we got to the office and the AOL logo was everywhere, but once I was there I didn't leave, because I was like "if you let me sing the unedited version of this song and put it on your website, I guess that's a good thing... and I'm already here." The Moldy Peaches were on the View and I was able to briefly mention an organization in New Orleans that I did a benefit for, but the song we played didn't have any message.

**Which organization?**

It's called Sweet Home New Orleans and they try to get musicians who were displaced by Katrina into new homes and get them back on their feet in New Orleans if they want to return.

**Have you been able to do other benefit shows?**

I just did a benefit in Miami for shake a leg Miami, an organization that gets disadvantaged youth and kids with physical and developmental disabilities into classes during the week. That was the last benefit I did. They were really beautiful people. I'm doing one for the Albany free school in a couple days. That was a pretty important thing when I signed on with a booking agent was that they still let me do benefits and more community oriented shows and that it wasn't going to become all club shows.

**Do you want to talk about playing with Tom Morello?**

I want to, but I don't know if I should. I could very briefly say that I played a show for the film *Body of War* which is about an Iraqi vet who's paralyzed and who's now against the war. And it was a show with artists from a compilation he'd put together to raise money for him—a benefit compilation. I was the only woman who was a part of it. There were a lot of dudes and they're all fighting the fight. They're all part of the struggle against the war. But at the same time, it was very testosterone driven. I was supposed to perform at the end and they all did the grand finale before my set...the all-star jam. I felt totally silenced. It felt really strange to be a woman and to have been invited to be an official part of this event and to be completely not acknowledged by some of the bigger names that were a part of it. Rock dudes have their place in the struggle. They inspire people who maybe aren't receptive to the kind of music I make, but it felt really awkward to me, and I'd much prefer a gentler approach that's more conscious of everybody. Fewer sunglasses. More heart.

[Laughs]



Sean  
MAHAN

Sean Mahan's paintings have been visible in the DIY punk world for about a decade now. They have been on record covers for a number of bands including Twelve Hour Turn, Floor, Planes Mistaken for Stars, Dairo, North Lincoln, Beat Buttons and Del Cielo. He has a precise style containing simple composition that provokes thought. His paintings are both immediate and containing depth needing further exploration well beyond a glance. He is also quite a prolific songwriter recording wonderful indie/pop/punk songs at home alone and with various friends under the names Verde, Kids on Bikes, and Union Jack Knives to name a few. Sean has been quite an influence on me these past ten years in his work, friendship, and as an example in his life.

Interview by Rich Diem

**What stokes you? How do these things affect/fuel your artwork/music?**

I'm stoked on honesty, growing vegetables, riding a green mango beach cruiser, facing adversity and looking for solutions, pure health, aesthetic theory, and writing songs. I've noticed my state of mind is what really comes across in a painting, more than the content or concept of the painting and I think it directly affects how the viewer is going to feel. I feel responsible to at least try to offer something that could have a positive impact on someone's feelings. So, I try to approach painting with as much balance, peace, honesty, purity, and sweetness as I can.

And, of course, lifestyle choices allow for or stand in the way of these qualities naturally expressing themselves within us; so, there's a deep connection for me between choosing to live peacefully and usefully and how I am painting or writing music.

**Describe a typical day in your life.**

6am I practice yoga.  
7:30am I eat some fruit, maybe some strawberries are ready in the garden.  
8am I work on writing songs.  
8:30am I start painting.  
12pm I do some deep breathing exercises.  
12:30pm I'll make a salad

from the garden and read while eating. 1pm Painting again. 4:30pm Kelly comes home from teaching at the Montessori school and we'll go for a bike ride or walk down to the beach to check the waves. 5:30pm I make some dinner. 6:30pm I might go surfing, skating or if not we might read or watch a Bollywood movie. Or, I might do some gardening with the neighborhood kids. 9pm I like to read something motivating. 10-11pm I'm out...

**I am always curious in hearing more about your family since I find them all interesting and creative people. Share a family story that might be indicative of your creative nature.**

Well, my whole family is pretty creative, but my dad is probably the most expressive of it. A story? Once in 8<sup>th</sup> grade I was on this academic team (like mathletes or something) and they asked me to draw a portrait of everyone on the team for a t-shirt design. I was having trouble with it and my dad got really into it and ended up drawing all their portraits. I took the drawing to school and turned it in and told them that I drew it and they couldn't believe how awesome it was. They made the t-shirts and everyone was stoked and giving me compliments and all that. Then, they started asking me to do all kinds of artwork for things and everything else I gave them was pretty crappy in comparison. They soon figured it out and I had to come clean and I lost all my junior high art respect. How's that?

**How did your family shape/encourage you creatively growing up? Today?**

Both my parents encouraged my sisters and I to paint, draw, sculpt, and make music growing up. We had easels set up in the back yard and we had different kinds of paint, markers, pencils, and clay. My dad is a great painter and an architect so he had all the supplies including an electric eraser that we discovered would take the printing off of the covers of books. A lot of our books had white eraser designs on the covers. We also had lots of musical instruments around. We had two accordions, a ukulele, an auto harp, a saxophone, a clarinet, piano, keyboards, guitars, harmonicas, jew harps, a violin, and one of those wooden fish that make a zipping noise when you ran the stick across its scales. We also had some different recording equipment we were allowed to use; and my sisters and I used to record songs and our own talk radio programs. Today, they are





just as supportive and I think I have way more difficulty in accepting art as something useful and worthwhile than they do.

**People approach you for your original works, oftentimes to use for their own output most typically for record cover art. You are also commissioned to create cover art at times and also for various mural work, namely for Margaritavilles in association with Jimmy Buffet the world over. Do you have reservations/thoughts concerning the idea of someone else using your work to accompany/enhance their own output or reservations about accepting commission work?**

Ok, yes it's true, I do murals for Mr. Buffet. Those murals are neither really fresh nor engaging in my opinion, but I still have fun painting them. And yes the Jimmy Buffet myth of escapism in paradise is problematic. What keeps me involved is that I know the CEO personally and she is one

**It is apparent in your lifestyle choices you are mindful of ethical considerations. It also seems there is some suggestion to certain values in your paintings and song lyrics. Would you like for the viewer/listener to recognize ethical considerations through your artwork?**

I would certainly like to offer questions to the viewer/listener concerning ethics. It's not important for me to express something directly and have someone listen. I'd rather inspire, if possible, considerate thought. I think it's important to use our individuality to find specific, living, relevant solutions and not be given static, incontrovertible ethical principles.

**Knowing you as a kind compassionate happy person, I am curious to see certain darker aspects surface in paintings and lyrics. Do you see your work as critical or pessimistic in any way? Are you concerned that the viewer/listener could possibly see these elements in your work?**

I think real beauty is a balance. You can avoid inclusion of darker themes, but then you have a boring and saccharin image. When I see paintings of flowers and kittens, they don't usually have a huge impact on me. What I think is beautiful is something that captures the honesty and wonder of something warm, sweet, and pure rising out of something cold and heartless. I don't feel like the paintings are critical. I think it's important to direct criticism towards ourselves to refine ourselves.

**You have developed a process for your most recognizable artwork as far as medium and composition go. So there seems to be a degree of repetition and routine in the practice. What strengths and shortcomings do you see in this routine of technique artists and musicians follow?**

By repeating a process, you can build on the previous successes and failures. I don't mind repetition and I don't mind if something is not original as long as it is beautiful in itself. There are hundreds of thousands of punk songs and I like a handful. They might have the similar chord progressions and melodies as all the others, but some songs really make me feel inspired and enlivened. What's the difference? Even two people can play the same song differently and express completely different feelings. There is something that is put across in art that is greater than a sum of its parts.

For something interesting to come across, I think there needs to be a degree of selflessness. Selfish motivation is what makes art suck. Also, with repetition, things slowly evolve over time and you might end up somewhere completely different than where you started. In that sense, it's not really a repetition, but an evolution. I think it's a natural process for artists to follow.



**Are there any fresh projects/techniques in your near future?**

I'm working on a series of paintings for the summer that's portraits of influential artists/musicians. The portraits are of the artists as children. I'm also working on writing 77 songs about riding bikes for a new album called "77 songs of cycling" for my band Kids On Bikes.

Sean's paintings can be found at:

[www.seanmahanart.com](http://www.seanmahanart.com)

His music under the name Verde can be found at [Bakeryoutletrecords.com](http://Bakeryoutletrecords.com)



of the most peaceful, environmental and socially responsible businesswomen I know of. She does a lot for the welfare of both her employees and the community that she lives in. She also funds and establishes nature reserves in the Florida Keys, developing and supporting numerous charities and service organizations and converting major lumber forest land to organically grown standards. She's also deeply involved in Social Ventures Network (The organization for socially responsible business.) So I feel okay with the murals. As far as others using my work to accompany their own output, I feel if someone is drawn to commission me to use my artwork, they are most likely in line with what I am trying to express, at least in some way. I don't identify with every band I have done cover artwork for, or even identify with my own art, so I don't worry about being discriminating.





DEAD

FRIENDS

You

*wonder sometimes if you'd still  
like a band even if you weren't friends with them.  
Well, I can absolutely say that Dead Friends would be  
100% even if we didn't live in the same town and I  
didn't know that they were great human beings playing  
righteous songs.*

*To wit, I'm thinking about a recent show at a nightclub  
here in town wherein some ding-dong heckled them with  
something like "Yeahhhh, dude, your momma's pussy!"  
Daniel looked puzzled for a second then replied, "Shut  
the fuck up" and Tony & Andy started one of the new  
songs that sounded like Nirvana covering In/Humanity.  
What I'm saying is that they're on tour this spring, so if  
you care about music you should go check it out.*

*Interview done in late 2008 by Travis Magon. Dead  
Friends is Daniel (bass), Tony (guitar) & Andy  
(drums)*

*Photo by [illegible]*

**Thanks for coming over. This is for Give Me Back. Answer as much or as little as you like.**

**Daniel:** (grabbing the recorder & speaking clearly) -- O-K. (much laughter).

**Thanks for breaking my tape recorder, Daniel.**

**D :**

No, it'll be like a noise band now.

**If it sounds like Man is the Bastard, that's okay.**

**For being three of the nicest people in Gainesville, how did you come up with the name Dead Friends?**

**D:** I really like band names that make people uncomfortable. I think it's good to not be able to say your band name to your boss for your parents without it being weird.

**Religious as Fuck.**

**D: Chrome Youth**

**Andy:** Asshole Parade.

**Tony:** Everything. Each time my dad asks me, "Which band is playing?" and I say "Dead Friends" then he yells, "What the fuck? Why do you have that name? You'll never go nowhere with that name!"

**D:** And you're like "We're going on tour, we are going somewhere." Seriously

**Since you all play in a good number of other bands, both in the past and presently, how would you say that Dead Friends is different? If it is different...**

**T:** For me, it's the first Gainesville band I've been in that's just a 3-piece. ~~Also, you~~ that's not just straight-forward power chords. I can really play whatever I want. It's not limited to a certain sound. We all put in equal amounts. He

& plays drum parts

that get us really motivated to do things. I'm not going to say it's more of a group effort than other bands, but somehow it meshes a little bit

**D:** For me, it pushes me to do more. It's a lot more challenging than my other bands. No offense, everybody!

**(laughter) Sorry. Maybe that's a loaded question.**

**D:** Having to sing and play bass is really hard, and I've never done it before. There's also no real history between us—none of us have played together before. It's nice.

**Going back to having a name that discomforts parents and bosses, I'll say that I've had some funny reactions when I wear either of my two Dead Friends shirts. The first is the one with scissors, that says, "life is fucked / quit trying to hide it"...**

**(laughter)**

**What sort of reaction have y'all had?**

**D:** to Andy: Do you have that t-shirt?

**A:** Yeah. And it's bright purple.

**T:** We get the same reaction you'd expect to get. People are either, "Yeah, that's fucking awesome" or being really awkward about it.

**D:** At this point, it's 2008. Punk happened and happens. Marilyn Manson happened/happens. So I think most norms are unphased by that. But it could be unnerving for people that know us better. We also don't wear our t-shirts, so it's not really our problem.

With that, I think it makes people uncomfortable because it's true. Bum 'em out— that's alright.

**So the other t-shirt. The tour one with the picture that maybe Matty D. drew...**

**D:** No, that's an Aleister Crowley drawing! There's speculation, but supposedly it's a self-portrait.

**My bad. I was wearing that shirt at the kung fu school when this fellow (who's both overly talkative and overly Christian) comes over to me and says, "Travis, I never expected you to wear a racist shirt." So I'm like, "What are you talking about?" because I really didn't know. And he says, "Well, that shirt is obviously a caricature of an older Chinese man. Look at those eyebrows and that pointy head." [laughter] All I could say was, "What? Dude, people don't develop pointy heads." I walked away but thought, "This is not a fucked up shirt." But it gave me a second of doubt. \***

**D:** Maybe he perceives Asian people that way. I don't know... That wasn't anyone's intention with it— especially ours. But even with Aleister Crowley... some people think it's a self-portrait and others consider it just a demonic character. He wasn't racist. That's that. He was a lot of things but he wasn't racist.

**How about reactions to song lyrics referencing Jean Genet or Ursula K. Le Guin?**



**D:** I wrote both of those lyrics, so I'll answer. The general reaction is like, "Cool, you read books too." With Ursula Le Guin it's more of a surprised, "You like sci-fi?" Which is weird, I admit. I've never had anything negative happen. It's generally just people wanting to talk about books, which I'm all for.

**So this is me interpreting the lyrics, and I may be way off, but I really like that you used Genet as a contrast for people who think they're edgy and transgressive within the scene...**

**D:** Yeah. You read it well. It's about somebody who sucks. Basically, that's the song. Which is maybe a cheesy topic. But it's about a family member and there's a constant façade with this person. Jean Genet was not as great. In the simplest terms, the rhyme's there with his name and he's a playwright. There's also a lot of pretension that goes along with people that like his work. He's one of my favorite authors.

**Good answer. In terms of cover songs, was it difficult choosing the Nirvana songs?**

**T:** The Nirvana songs were easier than everything else.

**A:** It was difficult though to choose just one.

**T:** We did two different Nirvana songs. "Tourettes" off of In Utero, and "Drain You" from Nevermind.

**A:** Because of those things, we're starting a Nirvana cover band with my roommate K-Flow.

**I know K-Flow...**

**A:** He's going to sing. K-Flow-bain.

**D:** We did an Assfactor 4 song on one of the tapes, and played it out maybe once. It was such a disaster that we decided to just 86-it for life.

**T:** Recording it was easy.

**D:** It's my favorite song on there.

**T:** We did the music acceptably, but when I tried the vocals I didn't realize that it's impossible to do both. I gave them serious credit for pulling it off.

**But they had multiple guitarists and singers!**

**D:** Yeah! Tony was playing both guitar riffs.

**Was playing that song somewhat of a reaction to so many reviews comparing y'all to Assfactor 4?**

**T:** Actually, Assfactor 4 is one of the reasons we're a band. Me and Dan played music together before Daniel came along. I'd go over to his house after work and we'd drink beers and play music. We were both absolutely crazy about Assfactor 4.

When I met Daniel I told him we wanted to start a band like that and he said, "Fuck yeah."

**D:** Even though I'd actually never heard them. [laughs] "Sounds awesome. Umm... you should let me borrow that record."

But the real reason I wanted to push that issue is because I went on tour with Kill Your Idols and they used to always get compared to Negative Approach. They had this short funny song called, "Stop Comparing Us to Negative Approach". And then they'd play a Negative Approach song right after that. I thought it was funny.

The first stuff we recorded does sound like Assfactor 4. Not exactly, but it's a pretty obvious influence. All the newer stuff is a pretty serious departure. It's a lot harsher in my opinion. So for me, putting that cover on the tape was like, "peace out."

**How about other covers since this seems like a good topic.**

**D:** One time Tony and Dan covered an Operation Ivy song in St. Augustine. Which I don't know how to play and don't know the words, so I just skanked. I just want to go on the record saying that St. Augustine loves ska. We're actually, recently, trying to become a local St. Augustine band. St. Augustine is like an hour and a half away, and everyone there is pretty young and excited. As opposed to Gainesville, where they're...

**T:** Young and unmotivated.

**D:** Young and drunk. So we decided to...

**Not move, but just play there often?**

**D:** And not get paid. [laughs]

**T:** So we played two shows in two weeks there.

**A:** And they were both full.

**T:** They were both at this bar called Knobbies. A sports bar.



**Along those lines, and take this in whatever direction you want, but how would you say that living in Gainesville and being part of this long-running scene has shaped your songs?**

No Idea is a big part of Gainesville music. And they're some of our good friends. We have all the respect in the world for them. We've worked with them on stuff before. But how Gainesville contributes to our songs? There's a pretty rich musical history that I personally feel very disconnected from because I just don't like a lot of the bands from here. But the ones from here that I do like, I like really intensely. Like Moonraker or Palatka. Bands I first saw or heard when I was just getting into punk. Mostly from No Idea. But I never had that illusion like "Gainesville Rock City". It was two hours from my family. Not too far away but not too close. It's affordable. I already had good friends here. I did move with every intention of starting a band that I could go on tour with. Even though when you're on tour you're not in Gainesville.

**Tony, did you move up here to play music?**

**T:** I moved up here to get out of Miami, where I'd lived for 20 years and I was absolutely sick and tired of it. I had the opportunity to move up so I did. I was here for two months, I came up in May of 2004, and I was getting ready to move back to Miami in August because my sister was going to have a kid and I got offered a high position in this old job I had...all these reasons. But about two weeks before I was going to move back, John Weisburg came up to me, drunken and at a party, and asked if I wanted to be in Asshole Parade. I was like, "Sure," thinking this guy's drunk, he's not serious.

**But you already knew most of their songs?**

**T:** Oh yeah. I loved it. Asshole Parade was one of my favorite Florida bands at the time. Just to meet them and have 'em ask me was awesome. But I kind of disregarded his offer thinking nothing was going to come of it. Two days later I saw him at another show, and he said, "Bo I talked to everybody and you're in the band." I moved back to Miami for the month of August but kept on talking to John. I moved back and joined Asshole Parade. But I did want to form a band here because I'd been playing music in Miami for like eight years at that point and







didn't want to stop.

**Do you all not have a website? Is that true?**

**D:** I hope that in 2009 punks can have better things to talk about than the Myspace debate. It's ugly and annoying and the songs are compressed and coming out of shitty computer speakers. We do have "internet presence." One of our friends who helped put out one of our records and a tape Drugged Conscience records. And I'm putting out the LP, which will be at vinylrites.net. That's the easiest way to reach us...I hate that question. I do understand. Rupert Murdoch...it's a bummer.

**T:** Grow up. It's so hard at this point to avoid all the things that people talk shit about.

**D:** I'm not even talking about that. I just hope that punks today are more interesting than that. Even if we're just talking about records... And no offense but I don't care to read anyone's opinion about Myspace. It's just not an issue that's keeping me up at night. I think it's probably more important that you get your shirts made in America rather than not having a Myspace. It's just choosing your battles.

**I forgot about this question. Given the resurgence of a particular type of hardcore music (and I think it's awesome that I can now go see a number of DIY hardcore bands) but do you worry about nostalgia or coming at it uncritically?**

[quiet]

**I mean, do you think it's improved? Sorry, I know that's kind of a rambling topic...**

**D:** It's easy to talk shit about hardcore and be the cool guy who doesn't like any current bands...any of that bullshit. But in Florida right now, in my opinion, is the best that it's ever been. I think we are blowing 403 Chaos and all the 90's shit out of the water right now. Mehkago N.T., Cult Ritual, Divisions all these awesome bands are happening right now. We're doing a comp LP that's all Florida bands and it's going to be killer.

**T:** One thing I really like about the Florida scene right now is that in the past it's been like "Oh, Tampa's thriving right now" or Miami or Gainesville. Right now, everywhere in Florida

is thriving. It's the best that I can think of.

**D:** Plus, whenever I first started going to shows in the late 90's I'd have to sit through like Hankshaw to get to see Cavity. Now I just get to see cool bands. [laughs]. Okay, maybe I appreciated getting to see Discount and Cavity on the same show but it wasn't my thing. We still do stuff like that, but I like booking shows where I'm excited about all the bands. Iron Lung, Cult Ritual, Religious as Fuck and everyone's mind is going to be blown. It is getting better. There's about to be five new bands in Gainesville and I have

high hopes for all of them. Like Bad Year. Their first show was better than all the current bands' hundredth shows. Fierce, primitive hardcore. Not tired at all. Big ups. Shout outs.

**T:** I was so excited at that show. Smiling, shaking.

**D:** Also, Worlds just played their first show. Not World from Japan. Worlds. An amazing, simple grind band. ...So many good bands, and that's the only reason I book shows. Because it's really stressful for me to do a show.

**But otherwise things don't happen.**

**T:** When I first moved here there were no hardcore bands.

**D:** None. Not that we're solely responsible, but there were no hardcore bands.

**T:** So just having all these bands and the punk scene blooming in general has been awesome. It's getting me excited about Gainesville all over again.

**D:** Hopefully when this goes to print all the bands will still be around and we won't regret all the things we said!

**D:** Cult Ritual had a record out on Youth Attack and I think that's helped bring attention. But I'm just glad that the focus isn't always on New York or San Francisco or Boston. We like

those cities but there's so much great hardcore out there that's not on Deranged or Youth Attack. So much going on in other countries that gets ignored because it's not hype-machine bullshit. If you're only buying records that are cool on the internet, you're going to have a pretty crappy record collection.

#### Discography:

"life is fucked, quit trying to hide it" CD-R demo

"tour tape" on Drugged Conscience

"them vs. them" 7" on Obscurist Press/etc.

"Brainstorm split" tape on Vinyl Rites

"Rehearsal tape" on Drugged Conscience

"#1 Reason to move to Gainesville" comp. on No3dco

upcoming:

"I" on Drugged Conscience/PurePainSugar

"s/t" CD on Plan-It-X

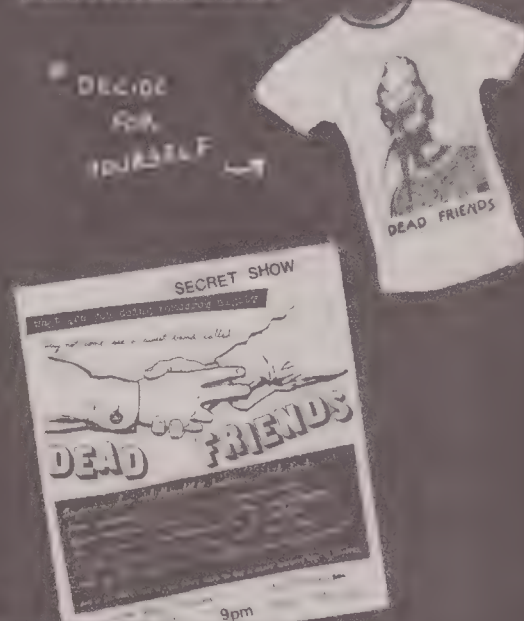
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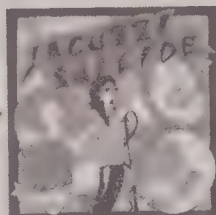
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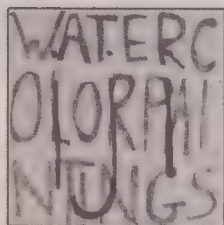
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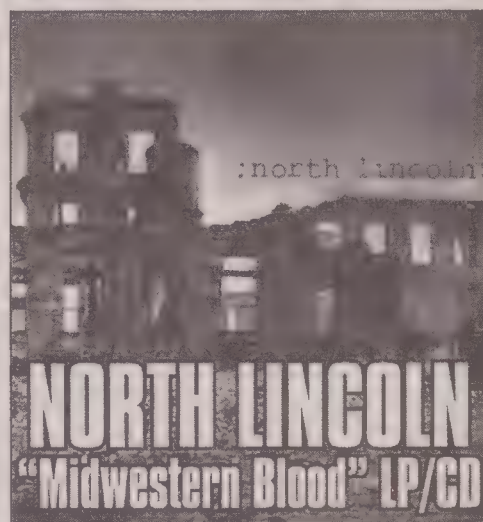
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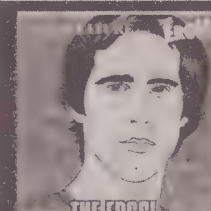
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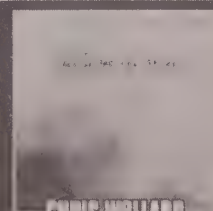
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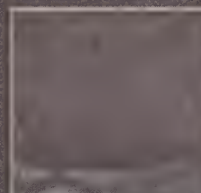
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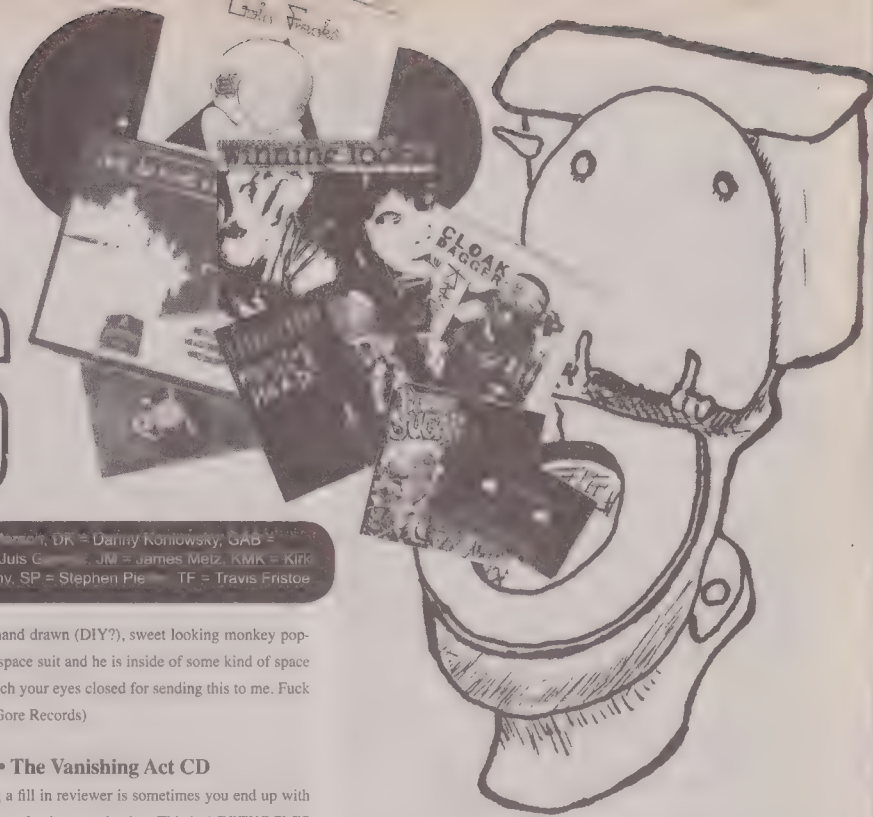
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## A BRIDGE TO MANY • demo CD

I try and take it easy on demo bands, so here goes. This kind of reminds me of MOUTHPIECE or some California related posicore that would be released on New Age Records. The sound quality/recording on this demo is excellent and this could easily have been released as a 7". If it was 1990 this would probably have given me a total hard-on, but alas it is 2008 so I'll have to pass on this, but fans of this kind of shit should give it a chance. KMK (abridgetomany@hotmail.com)

## ACTS OF SEDITION / SADVILLE • split 7"

Sometimes I hear a band that is so full sounding, so complete, and so raging that it makes me want to quit playing my own music. ACTS OF SEDITION are simply amazing. The production on this is flawless. I love this band and I want to hear more. I'm sure I will fuck up this description, but it's like BORN/DEAD meets DEATHREAT, minus the crusty edge and a total east bay punk style. Toss in some melody and layer up the guitars good and you have all the elements of an amazing hardcore band. Unfortunately, this is not an AOS release, so I have to flip it over to the other side. SADVILLE isn't bad, but they don't live up too AOS. Sadville has an early NEUROSIS or HIS HERO IS GONE vibe going on. It is mostly a long, slower song with lots of layers that give it that "sonic" feeling, but there is some guitar wanking over top of fast drum work that reminds me of newer SATYRICON or something. Be sure to toss in that sludgy, Tennessee sound. Do yourself a favor and pick this up. Go ahead, treat yourself. KMK (Inkblot Records • 216 6th Ave. #3C • Brooklyn, NY 11215 • inkblotrecords.com)

## ADRENALINE O.D. • The Wacky Hi-Jinks of... 2xCD

This record, though not by any means regarded as the paragon of Reagan-era punk, would be included as a pretty major footnote in the textbook of 80s hardcore history. Aggression and melody, humor and suburban frustration all collide within; this is music to bedroom mosh & hate your teachers to. The 2nd disc compiles a shit-ton of demos & outtakes, and—most significantly—the Let's Barbeque 7" from 83. Sick. SP (Chunksaah • PO Box 977 • Asbury Park, NJ 07712 • chunksaah.com)

## AGATHOCLES/ SAUL TURTELTAUB • split CD

This thing is just wrong on so many levels. First of all, I HATE split CDs. What's the point? Is it really a split? I don't know. Second it is really hard for me to give AGATHOCLES a fair review. Why you ask? Well, who am I to judge them? They have been together for over 20 years and they have over 100 releases. That in itself seems pretty rad, but to be honest I just never really got into them. I can't say they are bad because they are pioneers of grindcore, but at the same time I just don't really get into them. If you don't know what they sound like by now, you probably live under a rock. SAUL TURTELTAUB completely suck. Their "side" of this split consists of drunk punk, d-beat crust that sounds like a practice tape that was recorded on a boom box. Song titles include "Boobs in Arms" and "One Face I Loaded Cumshot" Need I say more? For what it's worth,

the cover art depicts a hand drawn (DIY?), sweet looking monkey popping out of the top of a space suit and he is inside of some kind of space capsule. Fil, I could punch your eyes closed for sending this to me. Fuck this. KMK (Bringer of Gore Records)

## AGATHOCLES • The Vanishing Act CD

The problem with being a fill in reviewer is sometimes you end up with releases which you have no business reviewing. This is AGATHOCLES from Belgium, I have heard this band described as mince-core and—while I'm not exactly sure what that means—that's what I'm going to stick with. Some of it is heavy and has a groove, but most of it is blazing fast grind-core. Some songs mix it up such as sitting with you on the eve of apocalypse, which has a longer stoner metal lead in that goes into a song with a more death metal feel. Political lyrics come in the form of both highs and lows on this release with the highs dominating most of the record. Worth noting about this band is the staggering amount of releases they have put out. The back of the jewel case serves as a discography showcasing the astronomical output by this twenty year old band. They must be doing something right. BN (Sir Punkly Records • Sirpunkly.com)

## AIRES AND GRACES • Hope and Fortitude CD

Despite the professional "promo cd" look of this ep, that could also be confused for a mid 90s DOS based video game along the lines of a revolutionary war themed battle chess, the music is stripped down, and minimalist in a really good way. Somewhere between 80s oi and pub rock, these songs are short, to the point and anthemic, full of whoa-ah sing alongs or gang vocal backups behind the choruses. With cover art of George Washington holding a saber in one hand and an eagle and American flag crested shield in the other, this probably won't appeal to prospective listeners outside of their own scene. DK (Dead End Social Club • 1120 Chestnut St SE • Olympia, WA • 98501)

## ALARM • 7"

This is not what I expected. The layout looks like a Grave Mistake, 80s style HxC record. Nope. ALARM play an old school death metal style crust similar to a slower REPULSION, but with a mix of BURNED UP BLEED DRY. Out of no where they throw in these chugga slow parts that sound pretty monumental. All of these elements work together nicely. The lyrics are pure hate fueled rants. Check this shit out: "Throw a middle finger to the sky, one more fuck you to their watching eye". Awesome. KMK (Inkblot Records • 216 6th Ave. #3C • Brooklyn, NY 11215 • inkblotrecords.com)

## ALDEBARAN • Dwellers in Twilight LP

This lurks deeper in the realms of metal than I normally tread, but I was lured in by the novelty of the extreme pace and duration of these songs. These three songs drag on for about 43 minutes with a minimalist, doomy, sludgy charm that successfully had me waiting for each sustained, downtuned note. I imagine this might play in my head if I ever

have to literally dig my own grave. The only bummer is the boring, generic metal artwork that screams "keep flipping" to any would be listener. Highly recommended for those who enjoy slow, heavy, evil, repetitive, 19-minute-long songs about things like beasts and pillars and "blackened gulphs". FIL (Blind Date Records • PO Box 6302 • 79039 Freiburg • Germany • blinddaterecords.de)

## ALGERNON CADWALLADER • Some Kind of Cadwallader CD

This band is mathy, fun and upbeat. They are passionate about what they are doing, and it shows, both musically and as people. Great recorded, even better live. I just used "On up" on a mix tape a couple weeks ago. Beautiful conversations between guitars consistently throughout the record. Dynamic rhythmic relationship between each member of this traditional dual-guitar, drum and bass family of musicians. CB (Be Happy Records • circley.net)

## ALGERNON CADWALLADER • Demo 7"

This is a 7" reissue of this fantastic Philadelphia band's demo from 2006. If you miss the 90s or wish you were there to begin with, this is as good a place as any to start, in terms of modern-day nostalgia. I'm a little over hearing how this sounds like a Kinsella band, but if the little league shirt fits, it ought to be worn. Think OWLS-era Victor Villareal guitar parts—a lot of melodically punchy hammer-ons and noodles—meets CAP'N JAZZ Tim Kinsella vocals—you know, of the vaguely childish, blown-out variety, and you get the rough gist. This band would've killed it in the mid-90s, and they certainly do kill it now. SP (Be Happy Records c/o Craig Woods • 4934 Cedar Ave • Philadelphia, PA 19143)

## ALL THROUGH A LIFE • 7"

Driving, JEHU-ish punk rock here. Ah, what a risky sound to aim for. We've all seen our friends fall face-flat trying to pull it off, but this is done with immediacy and originality. I hear a lot of KARP-split-era RYE COALITION in the vocals, too, which is something that I can get behind. From what I can tell, this band is from Vancouver. They'd fit well on a show alongside LIFE AT THESE SPEEDS & SCIENCE OF YABRA. Well done. SP (Clue #2 Records • 202-1090 West Pender St. • Vancouver, BC V6E 2N7 • clue2records@gmail.com)

## ANNABEL • Now That We're Alive CD

Kent, Ohio's ANNABEL are an indie-pop trio that recall a time when

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giants like JIMMY EAT WORLD and THE GET UP KIDS still put out 7" and played college radio stations. That isn't to say that the band is rehashing old ideas of what "emo" used to mean. This EP of 5 mixtape-ready songs, sounds fresh, with hazy guitar lines and melodic nonchalance a la MENEGUAR. Doses of bells, keys, and Phil Spector-like hooks create a refreshing blend of indie-rock. The CD comes in a delightfully DIY sewn pocket. Recommended for summer road trips. MC (Annabel • 857 Bryce Road • Kent, Ohio 44240)

## ANTLERS • CD

I got really excited because my friend, Erin Tobey is billed as the singer of this band. Turns out, there's not much singing on this entire cd. When the singing finally commences (about 3-4 songs in), there's several people singing at once and all of the lyrics are vague and repetitive. As for the rest of the band, they're playing a style of (mostly) instrumental indie rock that I'm not really familiar with...sort of crashing and skilled and "epic". There's a whole lot of instruments involved like trombones, banjos, melodica, steel drums, and accordion in addition to the standards. I can't really say for sure, but they seem to fall somewhere between LUNGFISH and FLAWS. They would fit well on a show with GOOD LUCK and THE CATALYST. Also, I think all of the songs are named after types of trees. GH (Rorschach Records • PO Box 14712 • Richmond, VA 23221-0712)

## THE ATOMIC D GENERATION • Live from the Garage CD

My co-worker Chad says that the guys in this 60s-styled garage band obviously have a sweet record collection, but they've forgotten about the pop sensibilities that are at the heart of any great garage song. I say if you're interested in 60s garage, you should check out the Teenage Shutdown comp called The World Ain't Round, It's Square. FIL (rebellemotions.com)

## AURA • Ghost Paper Puts You In The Booth CD

Nerdy, mathy metal slowed to a stoner pace. It's mostly instrumental background music with pleasant tones and interesting arrangements. FIL (Noah Kenyon • 4018 River St • Olean, NY • 14760)

## AURA • Siamese Jesus CD

I'm perplexed over what is going on here. The cd starts with some mid-tempo/noisy amp reverb with mellow lyricism song that segues into an epic hardcore/prog instrumental that stops (and starts) into a sixty-minute recording of looped hotel answering machine messages/calls. Artist Hannah Wilke had done a loop of collected personal answer machine recordings (displaying her familial, societal, and sexual relationships) in the 1970's. Her concept is similar to AURA's in the case for personal empowerment. Yet, I don't understand what hotel reservation messages have to do with that. JM (Noah Kenyon • kissyourbike@hotmail.com)

## AURYN • demo CDR

Auryn is this anarcho-punk metal band from Pittsburgh that reminds me a lot of... Pittsburgh. I'm thinking bombed out factories and abandoned buildings here. Hmm. It's like 90s emo meets post-apocalyptic nature-metal in the vein of TEM EYOS K1 then all wrapped up in a primitivist how. Crimethinc kids should definitely check this out. GT (AURYN c/o Kyle • PO Box 10223 • Pittsburgh, PA 15232 • aurnpgh@gmail.com)

## AVSKUM • Uppror Underifran CD

Founded in 1982, Sweden's AVSKUM have been raging since long before I was a gleam in my father's eye and have been a staple of the d-beat crust scene for years. Having not heard any AVSKUM releases in a very long time I was skeptical that these Swedes could release a rager all these years later, but holy shit was I wrong. Apparently AVSKUM has already gone through their shitty experimental goth/crust/metal phase and have returned to what they do best, creating absolutely raging crusty d-beat. This CD sounds right at home with the early Swedish d-beat bands like ANTI-CIMEX or TOTALITAR while including a definitive MOTORHEAD influence as well. What you get with this release is overdriven guitars, solos, and d-beats for miles. The Lyrics are sung in both English and Swedish with song titles such as "Capitalism is Terrorism" and "Killed by the State." This band makes me feel like an idiot for complaining about feeling old at twenty-three. Buy this CD and bang

your head against a wall. BN (Prank Records • PO Box 410892 • San Francisco, CA 94141 • prankrecords.com)

## BAADER BRAINS • The Complete Unfinished Works of the Young Tigers 12"

This is a completely flawless release from start to finish. I don't even know where to begin. It is not often that a band comes along that is totally original and refreshing. This is noisy, loud, and abrasive, yet technical, emotional and rocking all at the same time. Songs are laced with samples and political statements and ideology. At times I hear elements of later era BORN AGAINST or UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMAGEDDON. Maybe even elements of that Gravity Records sound or some SWING KIDS. Driving, heavy, rhythmic, thick, oozing, bass guitar and pounding drums set the tone, while jangly, yet aggro as hell guitars rip through like a buzzsaw. At times chaotic, but the tempo always manages to cut in with a driving rhythm at some point. I wish this had at least 2-3 more songs on it because it really is great. Tracks are typically separated by samples, sound bytes or odd music. The vocals have that snotty, pissed off angst to them, but the words still remain audible and I love it. There are even some clean vocals and chorus parts. The lyrics are brilliant and every song has a story or essay written along side of it, which brings me to the packaging. Again, flawless. Very colorful, artistic, and creative. Even the inside of the record jacket (you heard me) is illustrated. Included is a 12 page booklet entitled "unconventional warfare survival handbook". There is so much information and emotion put into this release making it an amazing project all around. I honestly hope someone else reviews this besides me to give more insight into this dynamic release. Get this because it is mandatory. This is a split release between Clean Plate, Waking Records, and Empryre. KMK (Waking Records • 794 Washington Ave. #8 • Brooklyn, NY 11238)

## BERNARD/WORN IN RED • split 7"

While listening to BERNARD from Atlanta, I racked my brain to try and figure out how best to describe them. Their genre of artsy yet intense punk is one I don't listen to often yet still could remember hearing at one point or another in my life. They sound like they would fit perfectly on Three One G Records with melodic and sometimes chaotic punk that brings to mind bands like SWING KIDS. WORN IN RED plays a similarly unique blend of angular punk rock with a few melodies and a bit of scream thrown into the mix, giving it more of a dynamic feel. BN (Alaska Records • alaskarecords.net)

## BEST FRIENDS FOREVER • CD

This is the record that put lo-fi pop sensations BFF on the map, and with good reason, featuring classics like "Abe Lincoln" ("I would like to go back in time and be your wife, not because I'd be the first lady, but because I think you're hot shit") and their tragic anthem of a love

lost with Orlando Bloom, "How BFF Breaks It Off With Movie Stars." These ladies (and lad) are talented as hell and show it off on keyboard, guitar, drums, bass and drum machine, just the three of them. The bonus tracks on this re-issue are mostly demos of songs that made it on their second full length, with more of a bedroom recording feel. I wouldn't pick this up for the bonus tracks alone, but if you've never heard BFF's early stuff, this shit is legendary. GT (Plan-it X Records • PO Box 14001 • Gainesville, FL 32604 • plan-it-x.com)

## BIG BABY • Demo CDR

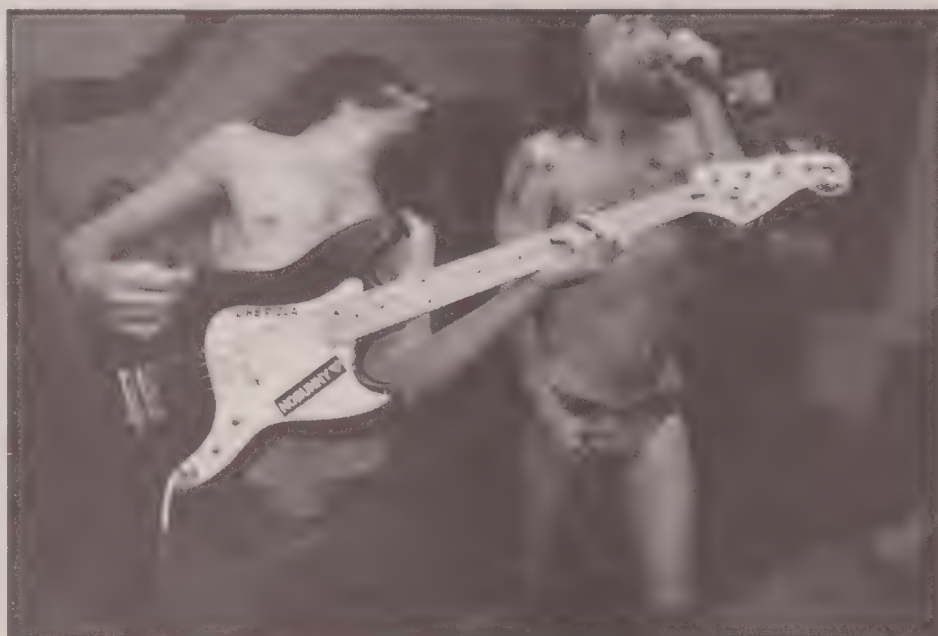
Angsty, sour and stoned. Basement style recording doesn't leave much room for aural exploration, though heavily panned. Slower dissonant riffs, and noise sections probably great live, if super loud. CB (big-babynola@gmail.com)

## BIG RATS • Demo TAPE

The cover art is a crude drawing of a skull made up of naked bodies. It's not quite as refined as the version that Salvador Dali did over sixty years ago—this updated version is a little more genital-centric—and it has the appearance of having been drawn out of boredom by a thirteen-year-old in the back of the class—wishing that dumb old teacher would just shut up already. Combined with their band name written in CRASS lettering, I was expecting to hear some juvenile crust, so I was taken aback when the vocals came in sounding like they were coming from a muscle-bound 35-year-old with faded tattoos. The music itself is cool and simple 80s Boston Hardcore with an appropriately bleak, egocentric world view. This definitely stands out amongst all the bands that do this style. The lyrics are short and to the point, dealing with standard frustrations, but in a way that's believable and reminds me of FAILURE FACE. The funny thing is that as soon as I look back at the cover, I instantly forget that this sounds good. I can't reconcile the two, but the band liked it enough to make vinyl stickers, so it must be some inside joke. FIL (Bigratsfil@gmail.com)

## THE BIG DRUM IN THE SKY RELIGION • Humanity Won't Be Happy... CDR

The Packaging for this record is right up my alley. It comes in a 6x9 Kraft Envelope and has a xeroxed booklet with neat-o scrawly primitivist drawings in it (and the remainder of the statement of the title "Happy'til The Last Bureaucrat Is Hung With The Guts Of The Last Capitalist" – hmm...) It's a live four-track recording, which also sits nicely with me. It's 80 minutes long, which becomes problematic when one realizes that it's a mass of highly distorted percussion sounds which sounds like EINSTURZENDE NEUBATEN recorded through five or six tape decks with the input gain set to 10. I like lo-fi recordings if the music is good and I totally support DIY documentation but I'm frustrated by wanting to hear what's happening and not being able to. I will say, however, that if the recording is meant to sound like this, an 80 minute



NO BUNNY

Photo By Fil



running time looks a bit like malice directed at the listener. If demonic percussion and incomprehensible vocals are your thing you might want to check out **THE LEGENDARY STARDUST COWBOY**'s monumentally deranged "Paralyzed". It's slightly more coherent and over in about 3 minutes. HM (Big Drum Sky Religion c/o Emily T. • 281-A W. Market St. • Harrisonburg, VA 22801)

### BLACK BRIDGE • Demo 08 TAPE

You know what I think is funny? The idea of really normal dudes starting crust/grind bands to promote really mainstream ideas, such as *one is more valuable to society if they are employed* ("put down the bottle, pick up an application"), or *not littering is an integral part of environmental conservation*. However, this band harshes the normal-dude vibe by also discussing such ideas as *hippies who drive cars should be choked to death by their own dreads*, *Kanye West's post-Katrina comments about George Bush not caring about black people are discredited by his endorsement of Nike*, and *pescatarians are cop-outs*. Adding to the contradiction of ideas is a song about hating "hard lines," although I guess this term is applied only to those who are anti-marijuana. I'm guessing they particularly take an offensive to such "hard lines," because it seems like they really, really like weed. I mean, I'm not judging because I also quite enjoy the dank bud, but I've never thought it would be a good idea to live in Rochester and start a band with insanely goofy screechy-guy-versus-growly-guy vocals and write a song called "Johnny Weedseed," so I think that maybe I like weed in a very, very different way. But if you like pot in a "double kick pedals are totally sick" way or in a "I think throwing a funky MR BUNGLE-esque ditty called 'Whale on the Clouds' onto my demo is sweet plan" way, this is right up your alley. JG (Tape Delinquent Records c/o Graham • 23 Wheelon Drive • Rochester, NY 14516 • turtlexpower@hotmail.com)

### BLACK DOVE • No Future No Fate LP

Every so often you get a record that absolutely floors you from the moment you put it on to the second it hits the locked groove. **BLACK DOVE** from Ohio plays a devastating brand of Swedish kang that simply does not let up: Absolutely pummeling parts ala MATYRDOD seamlessly transfer into driving mid tempo parts and then back again. What I like about this band and what separates them from other 'Portland' bands is that their use of leads on this record is well thought out and does not overpower the overall riffage. Lyrics are definitely dark but by no means bleak, a strong message of hope coming through the darkness is apparent in the lyrics. A beautifully simplistic foil cover ties this record together. Buy this shit and play it loud! BN (Solar Funeral • PO Box 2192 • Heath, OH 43056 • solar-funeral.org)

### BLACK MARKET FETUS/ IN DEFENCE • split 7"

Etched in the matrix of this record are the words "tacos rule pizza sucks". Dudes...lets not get carried away. That's a pretty bold statement. Anyway, BMF are crust blasting mayhem with blistering metallic guitar work. FastFastFast. The vocalist sounds like he has a hole in his throat. To be honest though, I am not into the death grunts too much. This is pretty grinding and metallic, but it still retains a DIY edge to it. The IN DEFENCE side isn't as furious. They actually remind me of Blood & Sweat era SICK OF IT ALL, even the vocals do too. Although, this is more punk, being that even though it is tough guy sounding, it does it without being moshcore. Crew chanting, breakdowns, etc...this is OK at best. Further inspection of the lyric sheet reveals an entire song by both bands dedicated to pizza sucking and tacos ruling. There is also confusion over the concept of "taco pizza". KMK (Scenester Credentials • PO Box 1275 • Iowa City, IA 52244 • scenecred.com)

### BLACKOUT • Stop the Clock CD

This CD is a bit of a cautionary tale. It's an age-old story: young punks start bands like ASSRASH, SCORNED, and PROVOKED, spend years attempting in vain to make punk a threat again, then start... a band like this. Is this post-crust? Crusty rock & roll? What happened? It starts off with & occasionally returns to some classic crust riffing, but then branches out away from the style of their old bands towards murkier territory that leaves me feeling like I walked in on a MOTORHEAD cover band at some sad suburban bar. SP (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • profaneexistence.com)

### BLACK RAINBOW • Don't Wait For the Future... 7"

Hell yes. God damn, I wish this was the standard output for punk rock

records today. Not just because this band rules, and they do—it's members of ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT playing similar raucous bay area punk featuring Ivy's deep soulful vocals—but also because the record comes with a 28 page zine highlighting exciting local projects in the bay and intelligent reflection on what punk rock should be. Erik Lyle of SCAM zine plays guitar and the record insert definitely reads like a bonus issue of SCAM, featuring the story of a guerrilla free food distro from the 60's, an interview with workers on a squatted farm, instructions on herbal remedies, how to steal redwood saplings, and great punk artwork. They give you their politics without getting cheesy or preachy. Great work! GT (Thrillhouse Records • PO Box 460207 • San Francisco, CA 94146)

### BORED STRAIGHT • 7"

This is a band you'd be stoked on if they were from your town and your town wasn't some hardcore hotspot like Richmond or whatever. They are not mind-blowing but they are good. I bet they would play with all the sick bands coming through and so if BORED STRAIGHT were your hometown heroes, you'd see them fairly often and be proud of them. The singer is kind of older (ie. not 19), so he's probably been around the scene for awhile and the band is a good mix of sincerity and jokiness. They play catchy fast hardcore with super snotty vocals, kind of like CAREER SUICIDE. This 7-inch also has a lot of extra inserts (poster, sticker, etc.), but not a lyric sheet. Just a lyric explanation sheet which is easy to mistake for a lyric sheet. Totally weird, huh? JG (Data Control • 4388 S. Pine Ave. • Milwaukee, WI 53207)

### BOOKJAW • demo TAPE

This is a quiet and soft electric guitar with light drums, but it sounds more like acoustic hippy campfire stuff. You know that "if GHOST MICE can do it, why can't we" sound? The result is heavily influenced, yet equally uninspired. There's little poetry or allusion in the lyrics, but they're oozing with idealistic clichés and they read like teenage manifesto-styled journal entries. They mostly seem like the kinds of thoughts that free-thinking people generally come to on their own. So the question is: why is it that when we finally discover how to think for ourselves, our first impulse is to try to influence others, rather than trusting that they will come to the same discoveries on their own? FIL (Radical Rabbit Distro • PO Box 2748 • Tucson, AZ 85702)

### BORN HAIRY • demo CDR

Remember when indie rock wasn't a disgusting thing? Back when ARCHERS OF LOAF & SUPERCHUNK and, to a lesser degree, PAVEMENT kind of bordered on pop punk? That's kind of what this sounds like at its more melodic moments, with some definite PROPAGANDHI riffing in "Bombing Al Jazeera." This is good, and especially so because they very clearly don't take themselves too seriously. SP (P:watt43@yahoo.com)

### BRAINDEAD/ROT IN HELL • split 7"

Since this 7" is unlabeled I ended up listening to the ROT IN HELL side first. Their first song started out with a pretty striking solo, then went directly into some early FROM ASHES RISE inspired crusty hardcore with a pretty crucial breakdown towards the end. BRAIN DEAD start us off with a pretty dirty sounding thick bass intro which leads us into some heavily INFEST-inspired hardcore. I enjoyed listening to both sides of this split, and while I enjoyed the BRAIN DEAD side more, I look forward to hearing more from both bands. Brutal, and well done. MM (Vinyl Addict Records • 1835 De Bourgogne • Sherbrooke, Quebec, J1J 1B1 Canada • vinyladdictrecords.com)

### BRAINWORMS/DYNAMITE ARROWS • split 7"

I saw BRAINWORMS play live a little while back and I thought they were really good. This is the first recording I have heard by them and it definitely stands up to their live set. The music and the vocals have a really interesting relationship. The tone of the vocals reminds me a lot of RITES OF SPRING and the way it is layered on top of the music reminds me of the way the FORMER MEMBERS OF ALFONSIN vocals are presented in long rants and stories—a frantic conversation. The music works really well with the vocals and, adds a somewhat jangled noisy atmosphere with really interesting guitar tone. The DYNAMITE ARROWS side of the split was a nice surprise. While it doesn't blow me away I found it to be a fun listen. Pop Punk with a lot of woo and

woah's. These songs are Catchy, fun and a great summer soundtrack to your friend's bbq with non-stop snacks and watermelon. MM (Rorschach Records • PO Box 14712 • Richmond, VA 23221-0712)

### BRASS • Set & drift CD

First reactions: (Visually) Couldn't read the heavy cursive band name on the orderly Joy Division-esque cover art. (Upon Immediate Listening) This pop rock band has good meter, as if to click track, very clean recording. Vocals = Love Child of Jeff Mangum + Ed Kowalczyk. Definitely not my thing, but they are well practiced, and the songs are laid out in a purposeful and methodical way. CB (brasslungs.com)

### BRIAN ROSE • No Elephants CDR

This is DIY, folkie singer/songwriter stuff. I was thinking PAUL SIMON, but if you listen to the song "birds," you can actually sing THE BEATLES' "Here Comes The Sun" over top of it. Decent recording. FIL (Sharpie Fumes • PO Box 513 • Thessalon, ON • P0R 1L0 • Canada)

### BRIDGE AND TUNNEL • East/West CD

I had a bad experience at a BRAID show one time and I always held it against them. It wasn't their fault, it could've been any band onstage, but that's the way the brain works. Consequently I didn't even know that I remembered what they sounded like until right now. Hearing this record unlocked a flood of memories that had been hidden from me for almost fifteen years. The musicianship is striking and there are also some strong likenesses to the better parts of CURSIVE, especially in some of the emotional outbursts, but with the lyrical optimism of HOT WATER MUSIC. FIL (No Idea Records • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL • 32604)

### BRITO • This Wave is Only For the Good-Hearted LP

Holy shit, did I just uncover some lost tracks from the *We've Lost Beauty* compilation? This band would fit in perfectly between TEN BOY SUMMER & SWING KIDS on that FNB comp. Think SHOTMAKER. Think really hard about SHOTMAKER. Seriously, did I step into a time machine? Because bands like this haven't been this good since, oh, 1995? SP (Degraanrepubliek • degraanrepubliek.com)

### BROKEN PATTERNS • demo Tape

Three songs attempted to be taped on one side of a 120-minute tape. Recorded with a super shitty dubbing set-up. Levels are all over the place and the music cuts in and out and the tape sounds like it's being eaten. From what I can hear, this is lo-fi garagey power-pop punk, like a less punchy CLOROX GIRLS. After the warbly demo, I am given the first song and a half of WU-TANG CLAN'S 36 Chambers. Then it cuts out, right in the middle of "Shame on a Nigga." Then nothing. What a tease. No lyrics included, no hint at where this band might be from. Dudes, get it fucking together. JG (brknpttrns@gmail.com)

### BROWN SUGAR • Deportation EP 7"

Wow, from the cartoony cover, I really wasn't expecting much, but these are some good-and-simple, short, fast, punk songs with a nice 80s feel. The first things that caught my ear were the super fast, fuzzed out, trebly guitars that scream JERRY'S KIDS. This literally sounds like it was recorded in the 80s. It's pretty remarkable. Great, simple, blunt lyrics and delivery. Pleasant surprises like this are what keep me engaged in the sometimes-arduous task of reviewing records. Thanks. FIL (Feral Kid Records • 379 Ontario St. • Buffalo, NY 14208 • feralkidrecords.com)

### BULLETS IN • Trashed & Burned 7"

This is the follow-up to their phenomenal debut LP, and it does not disappoint in any manner. Four masterfully done frantic ragers in the Mike Kirsch tradition, all packaged beautifully in a full-color sleeve. I hope this isn't the last we've heard from BULLETS IN, but I fear that it might be. If so, this is as fine a eulogy as any. SP (Waking Records • 794 Washington Ave. #8 • Brooklyn, NY 11238)

### CABINET OF NATURAL CURIOSITIES • CD

These are ten mellow songs of soft ethereal sounds backing a gently finger-picked guitar and breathy, whisper-sung female vocals. Fifty-two minutes of rainy-day music that comes packaged in an appropriately pretty envelope that's stamped and cutout as though she works at a craft store. It's nice. FIL (PO Box 3856 • Missoula, MT • 59806)



## CALABIYAU • 7"

This is challenging, but sounds kind of like the sort of post-punky, arty, sassy, minimal noise rock that makes me think of San Diego. The instruments remind me of CLIKITAT IKATOWI a bit, but more restrained and locked into a slower, unsettling pace. It's also a little funkier, with an awkward singer that brings to mind the PANOLPY ACADAMY GLEE CLUB 7". Interesting for sure. FIL (Lunchbox Records • 1419A Central Ave. • Charlotte, NC 28205 • lunchboxrecords.com)

## CARNAL KNOWLEDGE • demo TAPE

Sweet little demo from Brooklyn up-and-coming all-lady stripped-down thrash punk. I've heard complaints about this band having two singers, but what I imagine in my head is a bunch of kids starting a band and not being able to choose which of their two friends should do vocals so they just decide both of them should and then they high-five a bunch and the two voices sound killer when they are singing together, so whatever. I've also heard that this band's live performance far surpasses the quality of this tape. Some of the songs sound shaky, but some ("Why," for instance, being an especially killer jam) make me feel like this band could get really good. Lyrical content addresses sexism in its various nuances: internalized, between friends, societal patriarchy as it pertains to domestic violence, on the street, and at the show. FIL (131 Tompkins ave # 2 • Brooklyn, NY 11206)

## CASSETTES • Countach TAPE

In his years in FRODUS in the 90s, Shelby Cinca was always exploring other genres through countless side projects that delved into surf rock, 60s garage, and even a band that sounded kinda like the SWING KIDS. This current band seems to incorporate that same spirit of genre hopping, but applying it more in the realm of rock music. At times I pick up similarities to DEVO and TOM WAITS, but it's unpredictable and probably exhibits much more nuanced, obscure influences than I can identify. Sounds like scientists' rock. Like, if they made a remake of Bukaroo Banzai right now, this band could play the HONG KONG CAVALIERS. The fact that there is a theremin in this band would seem that much more appropriate considering that Léon Theremin was a notorious Russian spy. This tape comes in elaborate toy packaging complete with a toy car and a download card. FIL (thecassettes.com)

## CASTET • Kings of Punk/Punk Side of the Moon LP

Ok, half of me really dislikes the majority of this gatefolded package, but the other half is at least marginally interested. PRO: They sing in Polish and the lyric translations are of the punk-against-all-odds variety. CON: The cover is ridiculous, with one side being a Saturday morning TV style illustration of the band in space with famous aliens and a punk icon or two. The other side is an homage to the POISON IDEA LP that they've borrowed the name from, but if I recall correctly, there is nary a

Tasmanian Devil tattoo on PI's version. This guy has three. The music? It's a mostly inoffensive, middling effort. Eh. SP (Pasazer Records • PO Box 42 • 39-201 Debica 3 • Poland • pasazer.pl)

## THE CATALYST • Marianas Trench + 9 CD

Okay, the first song is called "This Bike Is a Gravity Bong" and that joke is so, like, 2002. Nevermind. This CD is a remastered collection of THE CATALYST's Marianas Trench 12", Split 7" with BRAINWORMS, and their split record with MASS MOVEMENT OF THE MOTH all compiled into one little digital disk. Handy! This is fast, sorta wanky, screamy, weirdish hardcore with some long sonic-ass guitar interludes. It's hard to describe....maybe like Sam McPheeter's fronting a mix of late period BLACK FLAG and OMAR SOULEYMAN...and they all like HICKEY. It's crazy shit and I can see it growing on me on some late night walk around town. GH (The Perpetual Motion Machine • PO Box 657 • Hamilton, VA 20159 • theperpetualmotionmachine.com)

## CELESTE • Nihiliste(s) CD

France's CELESTE features members of the now broken up MIHAI EDRISCH. This is some solid European hardcore complete with pummeling drums, angry and extremely heavy guitars and really thick sounding screamed vocals. These songs definitely sound somewhat metallic at times but also have pretty melodies that are woven into these thick guitar riffs. At times they remind me of bands from France like AMANDA WOODWARD. But they also have some musical moments on this cd without vocals that remind me of bands like TIDES or PELICAN. The CD comes in a nice digipak with the inside gatefold holding all the lyrics and information. Sadly, my French is not the best. I look forward to hearing more from this band and would be curious to see what they are like live. MM (Denovali Records c/o Alterauge • Graf Engelbert Str. 4 • 44791 Bochum • Germany • denovali.com)

## CHEAP GIRLS • Find Me a Drink Home CD

Who wants to bet that there are no girls in this band? Anyway, this is bar rock for those who are still trying to figure out the name of "that sweet band in that one episode of 90210." FIL (beartrapp.com)

## CHEEKY • Choke On A Cheeseburger 7"

Four-piece snotty & angry Brooklyn punk that will punch you about the head, face, and neck. People have compared this to East Bay/Lookout pop punk, but I'm not "people" and I would only halfway agree with that. Yeah, there's melody to be found, but there's a much greater urgency, a gut-punching attack that all but the best of that bygone era of bands didn't quite reach. Kate's vocals are fucking vicious. Best song title of all time: "Grow Fins, Turkey." SP (Freedom School Records • 96 N 6th St • Brooklyn, NY 11211)

## CHOKECHERRY • In the Wine Press...CD

Bluegrass influenced acoustic-steam-punk. Judging aesthetically by the artwork and lyrics, I would have put this in the same camp as West Coast dirty folk BLACKBIRD RAUM, or even WHY ARE WE BUILDING SUCH A BIG SHIP. But the music isn't as dirty or artsy as the aforementioned bands, the lyrics are straight forward political, and it actually reminds me more of Appalachian influenced stuff like the THE CAN KICKERS. The only town I could imagine unselfconsciously screaming along about quitting my job or something is Minneapolis, and incidentally CHOKECHERRY is from MPLS, so maybe that'll work out sometime. GT (Chokecherry c/o Jon Collins • 2920 13th Ave S • Minneapolis, MN • 55407)

## CHRIS CLAVIN/THE MYSTERY BOOKS • TAPE

In Chris Clavin's most recent solo venture, he's abandoned band names and is finally going by his real name (kinda). You might know him from his songwriting in GHOST MICE, but if you've ever checked out his solo stuff, CAPTAIN CHAOS, it's a lot spottier. Of any of the solo stuff I've heard though, this is my favorite. The vocals are softer, the storytelling subtler, and ukelele replaces acoustic guitar for a batch of songs that emulate France's DAVID HERMAN DUNE. (The tribute is obvious, especially given the HERMAN DUNE cover at the end.) On the other side of the split is MYSTERY BOOKS, one of the newer crop of DIY folk groups that do the PAUL BARIBEAU/MATTY POP CHART thing well, without varying far from the formula. Think TOBY FOSTER, TINYFOLK, etc. Not bad, but not exciting. GT (Boom Boom Tapes • 502 NW 2nd Avenue • Gainesville, FL 32601-3232)

## CHRIST ON PARADE • Loud and Live CD

If you don't know this band then you must be from Antarctica or somewhere similar. If that's the case and you still managed to get a copy of this zine, I'll mention that they sound like CRUCIFIX meets Cause for Alarm era AGNOSTIC FRONT. Maybe toss in a little CONFLICT also. This disk was recorded live on KFJC radio and although I typically don't like live recordings, this is mixed really well and sounds great. I think this release would make a good introduction to the band for newcomers as well as please all the diehards. It's amazing that a band from over 20 years ago is still this fierce. Solid. KMK (Prank Records • PO Box 410892 • San Francisco, CA • 9414)

## CIRCLE OF FRIENDS • Go D.I.Y demo TAPE

This is a cool, fun thrash demo from Singapore. It has a great trashy recording that seamlessly blends in their short, fast, fun, thrashcore style with some youth crew influences and sometimes Boston-styled vocals. Sixteen songs that fly by. Hits include "True Till When" and "Born, Work, Breed, Die!" Highly recommended for any fan of DIY thrash. FIL (Trashkore@yahoo.com)

## CITY OF SHIPS • Live Free or Don't Tour LP

This is a compilation of this group's recordings from 2006-2008. This reminds me of 1998, when amongst all of the hardcore music coming out, there was a bit of epic/vocally-emoted music coming out. The guitars are the most interesting part of this record. They sometimes sound as if melody is taffy being pulled over a loosely electrified lake, in the middle of the night. Besides that, I didn't really get where it was going or when it had arrived. Too emotive for my taste. JM (Forcefield Records • PO Box 26946 • Richmond, VA 23261 • forcefieldrecords.org)

## COGNITIVE DISSONANCE • Omens Of Doom TAPE

The back of this tape says it all: "Crazy Drunk Crust Metal for Crazy Drunk Crust Punks." If that's you, this is your jam. The cover looks like BASTARD NOISE, but it's all crust and the recording sounds great. Five songs. FIL (piratefrontier@hotmail.com)

## COLA FREAKS • Dødt Batteri 7"

Danish garage punks that played here with JAY REATARD and get their name from a LOST KIDS song, if that gives you an idea. The first song starts off almost as haunting and ominous as the record sleeve—which I think is the most interesting aspect of this single—but after the song ends, it comes back from the dead for another verse and chorus like an unsolicited encore, rendering the already repetitive riffs "played out." But this is worth finding for the art alone, which is disturbing. FIL (Local Cross Records • 16 1/2 Suffolk St. • Cambridge, MA 02139)



SHELLSHAG

Photo BY DAVE SANDERS





### COLIN LANGENUS • Living With the Rock CD

Um, I'm dunno how to react to this. I'm pretty sure this record is meant to be satirical. It veers from the metal-tinged hardcore of the opening tracks to the sneering sloppy punk rawk of "Give The Punks What They Want". "2012" speaks of Mayan and Hebrew predictions of the end of the world, "Time" is a bizarre exercise in lurching buzzing guitar until it a minute in becomes a surging meditation featuring the vague lyrics "time goes by crossed off days still remain they still refrain". What? "f.t.w.l.f.p" is over so fast you might not notice that it's an amazingly cheesy 80s metal riff and that's all. Track 11 is a karaoke cover of "Do You Really Want To Hurt Me" by Culture Club. "On Dubway" is a reggaish cover of "On Broadway". The record moves through country, country pop, and 80s rock. There are some genres I can't even deduce. Many of the songs are over in seconds. It's kind of funny, but I'm not sure it really succeeds as parody throughout. I guess if you're familiar with the conventions of various genres of popular music it will resonate a bit with you, but it doesn't work as well as a coherent satire around one theme (such as the film "Spinal Tap") or a collection of piss-takes of genres with some other purpose besides pure parody (a good chunk of the sole album by the Fakes). Maybe I'm missing the point though. HM (Corleone Records • PO Box 65 • Providence, RI 02901 • corleonerecords.com)

### CORPUS DEI • 10"

I like the look of this record. It has a cool hand screened sleeve with a rhino being carried off by a bird. Very odd. Musically this is non-straight edge sounding moshcore. Kind of like a crust metal UNDER-TOW or not so good CHOKEHOLD. Wow, I really do love CHOKEHOLD. Anyhow, it also kind of reminds me of DEAD BEAT from Germany minus the INTEGRITY guitar riffs. I can't really get into this too much, but you might. KMK (Feral Kid Records • 379 Ontario St. • Buffalo, NY 14208 • feralkidrecords.com)

### COUGAR DEN • Keep on Drifter CD

COUGAR DEN, from Milwaukee, play a very chaotic blend of screamo that breaks down into slower parts with more distinguished grooves. The guitar player certainly has a vast array of pedals at his disposal and he is not afraid to use them in the flurry of chaos and noise emanating from my speakers. The vocals are screamed and shrill at times but it works for the style of music. This is actually quite good and comes in an absolutely beautifully printed digipack. BN (Init Records • PO Box 871 • Sioux Falls, SD 57101)

### COWER • Hatred Songs 7"

This band is from Portland and they play a mix of fast/slow and start/stop metalcore. I'm not a huge fan of this, but it does remind me of a not so good version of LEFT FOR DEAD. I think it's pretty hard to pull off this style these days and still remain original. It seems all these

bands feel the need to down tune everything to death to make it sound "heavy". The first song on side 2 has a great stoner riff, but then it goes into some Seattle sounding breakdown ala BOTCH (without the layered mathcore production). I have a feeling that COWER is much better live than on record. KMK (\$4ppd • Television Records • PO Box 531 • San Luis Obispo, CA • 93406)

### CRAPPY DRACULA/SONOROUS GALE • split 7"

If you're making a mixtape for someone who loves both FLIPPER and LEONARD COHEN then you're gonna want to find this, solely for CRAPPY DRACULA's version of "The Butcher." FIL (\$5ppd Crappy Dracula • 707 E. Wright St. • Milwaukee, WI 53212)

### CREVECOEUR • II CD

The cover of this record features a snowy arctic scene and the music does indeed convey a feeling appropriate to that. 9 tracks of very melodic, mostly instrumental music prominently featuring acoustic guitar and cello with occasional muted chanting. I hear echoes of ENNIO MORRICONE, YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS, and Flamenco throughout the record in different places. The whole record is really pretty, and its minimalism makes the mono mix work well. The standout track, however, is the second song "La Pieuvre", with the aforementioned chanting. The voices, guitar, cello, and glockenspiel put me in mind of the serenity of the Carthusian monastery featured in the documentary "Into Great Silence". As the cover suggests, this would make excellent snow-day listening. HM (Denovali Records c/o Alterauge • Graf Engelbert Str. 4 • 44791 Bochum • Germany • denovali.com)

### CRITICAL CONVICTIONS • demo TAPE

Fairly sweet demo out of Ottawa, Ontario. Catchy hardcore full of hooks, not entirely unlike neighbours CAREER SUICIDE, although the vocal delivery delves into crust territory and the lyrical content especially delves into kinda generic crust territory, although maybe rhetoric about state control still feels super relevant and important to kids living in government towns. Who knows. Really decent recording for a demo, very listenable, although a few songs feel like filler. (\$5ppd • Richard Twardowski • 1675 Hunters Run Dr • Ottawa, ON K1C 6Z6 • Canada)

### CRITICAL RESPONSE TEAM • CDR

This CD from CRITICAL RESPONSE TEAM has a little bit of everything. Sometimes thrashy, sometimes slow, melodic, and crusty, and some songs are just weird in the great way that THE DEGENERICS songs are weird. I also hear a lot of R.A.M.B.O in some of these guys' songs. At first I was unsure what to make of this CD but the more that I play it, the more it is growing on me. The recording production is pretty d.i.y. and the vocals sound completely blown out, but again, it seems to work for these guys. No lyrics come with the CD but from

the names of the band members and the song tracks it seems that these guys don't take themselves too seriously while not coming off as idiots. They also take the time to thank DARK THRONE. A good, solid demo release and I am excited to see what this band puts out next. BN (Micah Jenkins • 5502 Sleet Drive • Indianapolis, IN 46237)

### CROM • Hot Sumerian Nights 12"

Have you ever heard CROM? If the answer to that question was no, you are a dumb ass my friend. This band represents all that is the fury of metal. This has elements of VENOM, DYSTOPIA, SLAYER, INTEGRITY, POSSESSED, and DISCHARGE all rolled into one furious package of metallic hellfire. To top it off it is completed with choking, hacking vocals. There are many samples, sound bytes, and even some hilarious live metal banter by Tom Araya. The insert is a collage that is made up of other collages that were used by older metal bands like ANTHRAX, NUCLEAR ASSAULT, and SUICIDAL. This is totally vicious and if you like your hardcore metallic as hell, get this immediately. I won't even begin to describe how sweet the cover art is. You have to see it for yourself to believe it. Dear CROM, please come and play to me in Chicago. Sincerely, KMK (Blind Date Records • PO Box 6302 • 79039 Freiburg • Germany • blinddaterecords.de)

### CRUX/PAZAHORA • Split CD

CRUX is a female fronted crust band from Australia although they sound like they should have existed in mid-90s America. This side of the cd brings to mind such bands as NAUSEA, early HARUM SCARUM, and RESIST. The singer growls dark lyrics over crusty guitar leads as the drums propel these songs along. These tracks aren't bad but unfortunately don't get me particularly excited. The second half of this cd is occupied by PAZAHORA from Singapore. Whether you want to call it emo-crust, neo-crust or whatever term is being thrown around town these days, these guys do it as well as any of their European or American counterparts. Melodic crust with tons of leads and fist pumping very reminiscent of EKKAI. PAZAHORA also mix it up by including strings on some songs and piano on others. Pretty typical, straight forward crust lyrics that do not need much explanation. BN (Crux • PO Box 22 • Enmore • NSW 2042 • Australia • anotherdayof-nothing@yahoo.com)

### DANIEL STRIPED TIGER/SINALOA • split 7"

These two Massachusetts bands seem to share an affinity for intricate guitars and tense delivery of passionate lyrics. A mix of the personal and political, yet very much poetic. I don't see a lot of American bands playing emo like this anymore. FIL (Clean Plate Records • PO Box 9461 • N. Amherst, MA 01059 • cleanplate.com)

### DAVE DEAN'S MUSICAL FORKLIFT • DVD

Sheesh. Most bands play for ten minutes at a time, then talk for a minute or two, play for ten more, etc. DAVE DEAN's apparently learned the powers of, in grade school parlance, Opposite Day: this DVD's almost 90 minutes long, with maybe fifteen minutes of it consisting of actual music being performed. Mostly what happens is Dean talks about the idea behind each song, complete with lengthy—sometimes very lengthy—anecdotes and cute little diagrams, then barks out minute-long tunes on his bass, sometimes accompanied by a drummer, usually by himself. It's a creative idea, and he's a more than decent storyteller, but there's something about the guy that rubs me the wrong way. I don't necessarily doubt his sincerity—if anything, he comes off as creepily, almost menacingly sincere. When he calls his friends who've killed themselves "fuckheads", I believe him. When he talks about carrying a stuffed animal around and anthropomorphizing it ("it's Punkbear!"), losing it at a fest and then writing a song about how he misses it, I believe him. When he says that he wishes all fucking bosses were dead, I believe that too. A self-professed forklift driver and substitute teacher, Dean's got some pretty good stories to tell—guys losing fingers due to bosses not training people properly, hitchhiking rides with kooks and sleeping under dumpsters, historical anecdotes about 12th century sword battles; he's all over the map. I can't really tell if it's his cadence or his tone or what, but the way he speaks to the audience often makes it seem like he's addressing a room full of children. That, coupled with the cute little diagrams, just left me alternating between feeling a) vaguely creeped out and b) like he was consistently



being condescending to the audience and therefore the viewer. Best part of the whole thing was watching the kids in the background trying to totally jam out to just a guy playing bass. KR (Plan-it X Records • PO Box 14001 • Gainesville, FL 32604 • plan-it-x.com)

## DEAD BONES • CD

The first song is crusty speed metal with galloping machine-gun guitars and lots of pick slides and wailing guitar leads, but then they go back and forth between that and the more common FROM ASHES RISE type of modern crust sound. They're from Barcelona and although, three of these eight songs are in English, I prefer the sound of the Spanish lyrics. FIL (Carnus Records)

## DEAD DOG • LP

Super melodic female-fronted punk from shit-guttered Brooklyn. It's kind of like if the PIXIES & SUPERCHUNK invited Ben Weasel over to sniff some glue. The majority of this band is currently in the next room watching My So Called Life, while some guy outside our house is soulfully singing "I want to fuck you" over & again. These influences combined produced one of the best Brooklyn-made records of recent times. SP (Mauled By Tigers • 97 Green St. G4 • Brooklyn, NY 11222 • mauledbytigers.com)

## DEAD DOGS • 7"

DEAD DOGS labeled themselves as Winnipeg crust punk but I believe they are selling themselves a bit short. I hear a lot of different influences in this record, which are blended together to make one raging 7". The cover art looks like a cross between RITES OF SPRING and RUDIMENTARY PENI with one comparison making more sense than the other. Some songs sound like AUS-ROTTEN while others sound like fast, thrashy hardcore. DISCHARGE worship leads into more melodic mid-tempo UK style peace punk ala RUDIMENTARY PENI. Some parts remind me of WORLD BURNS TO DEATH while others sound like a less riffy SKITKIDS. I have no idea what to make of this EP but the one thing I know is that it fucking rages and left me with my fist pumping and my ears wanting more. Plus, I'm always a sucker for releases that come with patches. BN (Dead Dogs • deaddogs@riseup.net)

## DEATHCYCLE • Prelude to Tyranny CD

What I expected to be a typical d-beat crust album, from the b/w political collage on the cover, was actually a thrash infused, straight ahead hardcore record. Once again, there is nothing new, or reinvented here, but it's fairly well done. And I suppose so from a band boasting members of, (according to the "Marketing/Selling Points" section of the accompanying bio/marketing sheet), KILL YOUR IDOLS, NEGLECT, NONE MORE BLACK, SHEER TERROR, AND MADBALL. That should also give you a good idea of what the overall sound is like. They do mix things up, with tempo and sound, which keeps the formula interesting. Also, to their credit, there is no tough guy posturing here, the lyrics are all political assaults on contemporary issues. The recording is well done, with quality sound and mix. The artwork and layout are well thought out and executed. While it isn't breaking any boundaries, if any of the bands mentioned above get your blood pumping, then this probably will too. DEN (Lifeline Records • PO Box 692 • Midlothian, IL • 60445)

## DEEP SLEEP • Manic Euphoria 7"

DEEP SLEEP hits you over the head with some mid-paced driving hardcore that nods to the 80s and particularly bands like the ADOLESCENTS, D.I., and ADRENALINE OD. You know, more on the melodic side of things, but a kind of face-ripping melody. The melodic discordance of the guitar leads is a cut above a lot of modern HC. Also a cut above the first DEEP SLEEP 7", to be sure. SP (Grave Mistake • PO Box 12482 • Richmond, VA 23241 • gravemistakerecords.com)

**DEEP SLEEP • Paranoid Futures 7" and Three Things At Once CD** I appreciate the way this band's sound has evolved with each record, noticeably but not drastically. Their new 7" treads a little more into Jade Tree territory, but also boasts a slightly fuller sound. The vocals aren't as far forward in the mix, but they still anchor most of the hooks. The CD contains all three 7"s and does a good job of cleanly presenting the original artwork in a way

that separates them into chapters, yet maintains a singular aesthetic. Only record nerds could make a CD look this good and simple. FIL (same as above)

## THE DEFENSE • Common Sense 7"

These guys appear to be from Spain, but they look like they are from Orange County. Melodic vocals and up-tempo songs with the occasional bass break and gang back-ups are aplenty. Is that a word? This reminds me of what a watered down INSTEAD, a straight edge version of BAD RELIGION or some other melodic. So Cal garbage would sound like. They even thank GOOD RIDDANCE. My favorite part of this, though, has got to be the weak Ray Cappo "what the fuck" vocal part. Yawn. KMK (Crucial Response Records • Kaiserfeld 98 • 46047 Oberhausen • Germany • crucialresponse.com)

## DEFIANCE, OHIO • The Fear, The Fear, The Fear CD

The buzz about this record was that it fell short of their previous efforts, but I couldn't disagree more. "The Fear, The Fear, The Fear" is everything their previous albums weren't, that is, a cohesive album and not a disjointed collection of songs. If you're unfamiliar with D.O.H.'s folk-punk track record, they are a collective of punk songwriters playing acoustic instruments including a full string section and on this record keyboard and electric guitar. The record at times veers away from pop punk, sounding more like orchestral pop a la BELLE AND SEBASTION, but still maintains a CRASS anarcho-punk aesthetic. The lyrical themes stay focused around personal alienation and living in a sometimes terrifying world. The poetry here is a notch up, the production is perfect, and the artwork and liner notes are awesome. There are no easy stand out tracks, but that aside, I'd easily endorse this as the best D.O.H record to date. GT (No Idea! • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL 32604-4636 • noidearecords.com)

## DELEOMETER • Rotation Um Die Ich-Achse LP

This record is really great. The vocals are extremely chaotic and the guitar work reminds me a bit of 90s European bands like ANOMIE. Some of the ways that the different parts change and intersect remind me a little bit of OFF MINOR, especially the beginning of the first song on side B. I think some of my favorite parts of this band are the vocals done by Sabine. Sabine's voice is haunted, dark and has a lot of attack. I really like the placement of the vocals over the music as well. This is a really strong LP in its entirety and it sounds great too. The mix and mastering were done by the Atomic Garden studio in CA. I would love to hear more from this band. MM (Asymmetric • asymmetric@gmx.net)

## DEPRESSIVE STATE • Total Annihilation 7"

You probably have a pretty good idea already, but this is pretty rockin' mid-to-fast paced hardcore with gruff vocals that fall somewhere between FUCKED UP and SWIZ. There's a heavy 80s hardcore influence, but the guitars are bigger and clearer, making the whole thing lean more towards the likes of JUDGE, but with underlying, melodic hooks. It's pretty catchy with a good, clear sound. FIL (thrashxbastard@yahoo.de)

## DESTRUCTORS666 • Bah Humbug CD

Damn, this is weird as hell. From the UK come DESTRUCTORS666 with an um, well...Christmas album. I'm not making this up. This is seuzz punk drunk rock complete with gang chants. ALL of the lyrics are about Xmas. You have to hear (and see) this shit to believe it. The layout is re-God-damn-diculous. Silly me. I assumed this was going to be some silly metal joke band by the looks of it. I will totally be drinking grog and jamming this during Xmas 2009 (if I can find it). Two fingers in the air spiked, bristles. UK punk rock. Bonus: they cover fuck Christmas by FEAR. KMK (Rowdy Farrago Records • England)

## DESTRUCTORS666 • Malleus Maleficarum CD

With the name of the album, and the imagery on the cover depicting a small group, adorned with the band's hoodie, bowing to Jesus, burning at the stake/cross, I was waiting to hear, possibly first wave black metal influenced, thrash. What I got however, was rock'n'roll influenced UK street punk, or, even more specifically, horror punk. The band has created a theme/concept album dedicated to the witch trials, and the concept of how "...the outsider becomes the scapegoat for the ills of society."

Which may or may not play out as well as it simply being a fun excuse to make an album about witches. DESTRUCTORS666 definitely show off metal chops, as is obvious by the drumming, and guitar sound/riffs. The vocals fall somewhere between MOTORHEAD's Lemmy, and classic street punk like THE THREATS and ANTI-PASTI. If you are a fan of 45 GRAVE and the NEKROMANTIX, this may be worth getting your hands on. Kudos on covering The Witch, by THE SONICS, but the cover of Ding Dong the Witch is Dead, from the Wizard of Oz, is just awkward. DEN (destructors666.com)

## THE DIAMOND SEA • Slow Signal 10"

It's so tricky to invoke the term "riot grrrl" for a band that currently exists. I think that it sometimes seems like reviewers use it to conjure a movement whose time has come & gone; like women's involvement in punk began & ended with Kathleen Hanna. Please. This has always struck me as a slight toward women making music in punk bands—stated as if there is one distinct category in which to file it all away. That said, I've heard DIAMOND SEA referred to as a riot grrrl band. Yes, they might tread some similar ground as bands like HEAVENS TO BETSY & TIGER TRAP (particularly on the instrumental), but it's a lazy comparison to make. I hear a lot of GANG OF FOUR-style post-punk, particularly in the song Hidden Figures. Whatever. A sandwich tastes the same no matter if you cut it diagonally or horizontally, and this record rules no matter what you want to call it. SP (Yellow Ghost Records • P.O. Box 281, Flinders Lane • Victoria 8009 • Australia)

## DISGUSTED • Rotting Within the Flesh 7"

DISGUSTED is a death metal band from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. This 7" comes in a very nice screened record sleeve, which nicely hides the gnarly cover art underneath which depicts a meat cleaver lodged in an indecipherable body part. What you see is what you get. Two songs of pretty stereotypical death metal with low guttural vocals, dark imagery, fast as hell, etc. I'm sure someone would be into this—it's just not for me. BN (Midnight Sea Records • PO Box 6764 • Concord, CA 94524)

## DIVISIONS • 7"

Totally vicious, spiteful, ugly, pissed hardcore ferocity. This rules. Divisions are from Tampa and you can totally hear the death metal influence in the guitar sound. This is really some of the best crusty style hardcore that I've heard in a long time. The layout has a WWII vibe going on and it even comes with a vinyl sticker which is rad. Get this record or get fucked. KMK (Human Crush Records • 15011 Lakeside View Dr. • Apt. 2402 • Ft. Myers, FL 33919 • fahy\_john@hotmail.com)

## DO CRIMES • Demo 08 TAPE

I like the name of this band and was kinda disappointed to read their lyrics and see only slight mention of thumbing one's nose at the law, and only by way of suicide and assault, the latter threatened mostly to those who talk too much. In fact, the idea of wanting someone to shut the fuck up is an overarching theme in the first four songs. In the opening song, "My World," a utopian world is envisioned wherein "people only talk when they got something to say in my world, my world." This sentiment of current social exasperation is further explored in the next track, "Killing Time," when the singer expresses that he may "blow [his] brains all over this place. It certainly beats conversation." "Stop" explains to an unnamed antagonist that they "have nothing to say to each other," while "Guessing Game" asks someone, "Why don't you just shut your mouth? Why don't you shut your trap?" because "all [they] do is whine and all [they] do is complain." The last two songs are about insomnia. Oh yeah, the music: dark and heavy hardcore from Pittsburg that reminds me of bands that remind me of BLA'AST. Some BLACK FLAG worship in there. Kind of like a less interesting COLD SWEAT. Unfortunately, something sucks, but I can't really tell if it's the recording/mix or the tape/dubbing quality. JG (Jim Sullivan • 4571 Carroll St. • Pittsburgh, PA 15224)

## DOUBLE DAGGER • 7"

What the fuck is this? Bass, drums, vocals and that's all. Singing about how you fell asleep at a board meeting = a boring song. My friend,



Cinque, said "If these guys are really at a board meeting, they are either A). people that are part of the system that we want no part of or B). trying to bring the system down from the inside, which doesn't actually work. They'll just be usurped into the cogs of industry." Also, singing "Blah, blah, blah, blah" for the chorus is just lazy songwriting. The next song is about buying things in catalogs. Yawn. Side B is a dance remix that someone did to one of their songs and it's the best thing on this record, which isn't saying much. Listening to this makes me feel like someone is playing a mean joke on me. GH ([posttypography.com/doubledagger](http://posttypography.com/doubledagger))

#### DOUBLE DAGGER • Sophisticated Urban Living 7"

Wham City mainstays DOUBLE DAGGER follow their full-length Ragged Rubble with two more bouts of sans-serif noisy post-punk. Recorded onto 4 track cassette, this release finally inhabits the raw, noisy sound and spirit of their live show. The A-side is "Luxury Condos for the Poor," re-recorded from Ragged Rubble, is a battle cry against the displacement of people as a result of gentrification and renovations. What excites me about this release is their songwriting, incorporating more melody, as well as their ability to create full-sounding songs with such a minimal set-up (bass, drums, and vocals.) Now that they've finally caught up to their live show's fervor, I'm even more excited to see what they do next. MC (Terra Firma Limited 8316 Loch Raven Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21286 • [posttypography.com/doubledagger](http://posttypography.com/doubledagger))

#### DRIPFEEDER • The Cure is Fatal demo CDR

CDR demos really bug me, I can't help it. So already I am salty about this. This is your basic crusty/sludgy band. I swear this style is like the "new" thing going around. It seems everyone wants to play like this. That being said, you have to play this style really fucking good to get a rise out of me. I'll totally pass on this one, but what the fuck do I know? I'm listening to CHEAP TRICK as I write this. Sorry dudes. KMK (Nick • 854 Carlisle Ave • Dayton, OH 45410)

#### DROWNING WITH OUR ANCHORS • Breathing Lessons 7"

This band does a good job of the "everything's falling apart, but just barely coming back together" screamo thing. It starts off stark with just a failing voice, singing along to a sparse, fuzzy guitar, steadily strumming a slow progression, for a verse and then, you know, it all stops for a second before the rest of the song comes crashing in all heavy. Comes in an appropriately pretty cover with an overlapping image on a transparency. It's nice. For fans of INDIAN SUMMER and all that. FIL (Commodity Fetish Records • 3400 Valley Dr. #44 • Manhattan Beach, CA 90266)

#### DICHOTOMY • Goin' Gets Tough TAPE

This band was hard to pigeonhole on account of the poor (some might say 'punk') quality of this tape. But from what I can gather, DICH-

TOMY, from Vancouver, plays fast sloppy crust punk with a significant fastcore influence that hails back to the glory days of the early to mid 90s. Very little melody in these songs as the drums propel through these songs. I love the bass tone on this recording as well, perfect for the sound the band is going for, as a more polished tone would take away from the overall rawness of the music. Tons of samples on this tape remind me of if CHARLES BRONSON was a crust band. Musically I would say this band sounds like a mixture of AUS ROTTEN and SWALLOWING SHIT. Dark lyrics about some common crust topics but are, by no means, generic. Would love to hear more from this band or see them live. BN (\$3ppd • Dichotomy • 638 Hawks Ave. • Vancouver, BC • V6A 3J1 • Canada)

#### DYNAMITE ARROWS • Blowin' It EP

Aside from the first song not really going anywhere and all four tracks being too long, this is solid pop punk with vocals that remind me of the YOUNG PIONEERS. To me that's a good thing, but for those not familiar with them, that particular comparison means that the guy is a pretty bad singer who really goes for it. I'm into that. I bet this band is fun live. RQ (Mauled By Tigers • 97 Green St. G4 • Brooklyn, NY 11222 • [mauledbytigers.com](http://mauledbytigers.com))

#### THE EGGS • Cut the Shit, Peepee CDR

Herky jerky punk that enters the funkier side from time to time. I like the quicker, busier songs more than the meandering jams, but this is good all the way through. Think of the weirder old LA bands crossed with the weirder old DC bands. This is an exciting band; hopefully they put a little more effort into the packaging next time, because this thing looks like actual garbage. RQ (\$3ppd 5310 Broadmoor Pl. • Greensboro, NC 27410 • [theeggscnc@gmail.com](mailto:theeggscnc@gmail.com))

#### EMPIRE! EMPIRE! (I WAS A LONELY ESTATE) • Year Of The Rabbit 7"

Gah. The roommate, David the Brit, says this thing sounds vaguely like MINERAL on Side A and maybe late-period SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE on Side B. All I know is the guy croons like he's a hipsterized version of Paul Anka, the guitar twinkles relentlessly and the cover of a bunny rabbit wearing a tie just ups the cutesy factor to a nausea-inducing degree. Sounds harsh, but when your accompanying one-sheet claims that the band is "unabashedly fueled with passion and honesty" and that the record "harkens back to a time when emotion was real and never calculated", you'd better be willing to back it up, and honestly there's not a whole lot about this record that doesn't feel calculated. KR (Count Your Lucky Stars • [countyourluckystars@gmail.com](mailto:countyourluckystars@gmail.com))

#### EMPTY GRAVE • The Dark EP 7"

While looking at the cover art, I expected this to sound more like TRAGEDY or TOTALITAR. Instead I was pleasantly surprised to hear

songs with more of an early 80s influence, like JERRY'S KIDS and VOID. The vocal delivery in "dui or die" is killer! I look forward to hearing their upcoming LP! Really well done! MM (Absent Records • PO Box 7927 • Richmond, VA 23223 • [absentrecordsrva@gmail.com](mailto:absentrecordsrva@gmail.com))

#### END THE AGONY • From the Lungs 7"

END THE AGONY hails from the beautiful coastal city of Brighton, England. Despite the scenic beauty and the wonderful vegetarian Indian food buffet in their hometown, these guys are pissed off, apparently about a love gone sour. The lyrics are an interesting mix of the self-loathing of SAVES THE DAY with the general cheery life-outlook of DYSTOPIA. Some songs sound like your typical heavy down-tempo EYEHATEGOD style songs while others have more of a metal tinge. Actually I have no idea how much this band really sounds like EYEHATEGOD but its pretty much the only band that I can think to compare it to. BN ([Spudutat@hotmail.com](mailto:Spudutat@hotmail.com))

#### ENOCH ARDON • TAPE

This tape has a really nice sleeve/outer cover! It is made from lightweight white fabric with a green deer design that is screened and then sewn together on three sides. The tape is white with splattered green paint on both sides. Really well done! It looks great! When I first put in the tape and started listening, I must admit I let out a little chuckle. The music is 100% ORCHID influenced. So much in fact that during the first song "osos de ojos verdes" I'm pretty sure one of the riffs is straight out of "chaos is me". While this tape sounds good and the songs are good, I wish they had a more developed sound of their own and not borrowing so much from someone else's. MM (Utarid Tapes • Azwari Zainal • Blok B, Unit 4-8 • Impiant Kota • Jln Kg. Attap • 50460 Kuala Lumpur • Malaysia • [utaridtapes@yahoo.com](mailto:utaridtapes@yahoo.com))

#### ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH CRUNCH • Vicious Fishes TAPE EYC

is a Florida based band playing what I guess I would call folk/pop punk although with an emphasis on the pop punk. I can't help but make a comparison to Florida folk punks THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB. This tape has a couple of faster punk jams on it as well as some slower songs with a bit of a country twang and even a song with a surf/ska flair. I really wish this band would just stick to writing their own music. They cover the theme song from Friends as well as a couple of traditional traveling songs that really soured my overall mood of this release. I really like the recording quality of this, however, as it sounds totally diy and is exactly how a tape should sound. BN (Dear Tank Records, P.O. Box 61681 Jacksonville Florida 32236)

#### THE ESTRANGED • Sacred Decay 7"

Two songs that pose a question: at what point can a band, even if they are writing and recording originals, sound so much like another band that they are a tribute band? I think this may be a WIPERS tribute band. There are worse things to sound like, but the bar is pretty high, guys. RQ (Green Noise • 2615 SE Clinton St. • Portland, OR 97202 • [Greennoiserecords.com](http://Greennoiserecords.com))

#### THE ESTRANGED • Static Thoughts CD

I'm always a bit trepidatious when bands do extensive genre-hopping (dudes in this bands are ex-members of HELLSHOCK and FROM ASHES RISE, and believe me, this sounds way different than that kind of stuff) and I honestly wasn't too into this record initially. But after a Portland heatwave and more than a few listens while sleeplessly sweating like a bastard in the middle of the night, I've got to admit that they're definitely onto something here. I'm hearing some nods to early CURE and maybe a souped-up JOY DIVISION, but mostly there's the angularity and instrumental interdependence of old WIPERS stuff; this is not a band where the guitars are expected to steal the show. Each instrument intrinsically relies on the others; each one forms a part of the bedrock. At no point do they ever really go off, but with a band like this, I don't really think that's the point. I think they're much more interested in building things to a slow boil. It's a dark, occasionally menacing ride, and a pretty good one at that. KR (Dirtnap Records • 2615 SE Clinton • Portland, OR 97202)

#### THE ESTRANGED • Fast Train 7"

I haven't read a review of this band that hasn't mentioned the WIPERS, so I'm not going to do it. Seriously. Even though I kind of did there. I'd



MASS HYSTERI

Photo By Fil



call this dark, driving post-punk, or maybe 2nd wave punk. Feel free to call foul on me for this, but I hear some early NEW ORDER in this. It's disaffected, it's detached, and at times even anthemic. Fuck it, you've heard of this band by now and probably know that it's some solid shit, regardless of what band from 25 years ago they may or may not sound like. SP (Black Water • PO Box 5223 • Portland, OR 97208-5223)

#### EVICITION PARTY • Forward Always demo CDR

I'm going to assume this is a demo because it's on a CDR even though it has nicer packaging, with a booklet, etc. It definitely sounds like demo quality. 1-2-1-2, mid tempo, JANGLY, punk rock that reminds me of what THE CLASH or RANCID would sound like if they didn't know how to play their instruments. The insert mentions that some of this stuff was written and recorded within 2 weeks and some of the vocals were "learned" minutes before recording them. It sounds like it. Fuck this shit. KMK (\$5ppd • Sharpie Fumes Collective • PO Box 513 • Thessalon, ON • POR 1L0 • Canada)

#### EYE FOR AN EYE • GRA 12"

This is not to be confused with EFAE from Boston. Don't get excited, they are not back together. This version of EFAE is from Poland and they have been around for over 10 years. This is pretty straightforward post-core sounding shit that reminds me of MOUTHPIECE or CHAIN OF STRENGTH with a NYC metallic influence, but still retaining a melodic, punk edge to it. Somehow I feel like I hear elements of later period AGNOSTIC FRONT as well. What I really like about this is that everything is in Polish and it can be such a harsh sounding language that it makes the vocals sound really unique. In fact, Anka's vocals completely do it for me and make this release so amazing. She has a completely unique voice and when matched with this style of hardcore it is relentless, passionate, and powerful. I love it. English translations are included which is really nice. Half of these songs say they were recorded in 2004 and the other half in 2006, which I think is odd because they released a split in 2005. Perhaps these songs were left over from that session. I will say that my only real complaint is that this is a little too long. There are cover songs by WARZONE, DEZERTER, and of course, CHAIN OF STRENGTH. I didn't expect much because so many damn bands have bastardized "True Til Death", but this version is very original and again, the vocals are so fucking rad. Nice release guys, this is great. KMK (Pasazer Records • PO Box 42 • 39-201 De-bica 3 • Poland • pasazer.pl)

#### FAITHEALER • Bound & Chained LP

For generic, metallic hardcore this is pretty good, and they've got the dual female/male vocals thing going on, but after hearing that they feature members of bands like HATRED SURGE and MAMMOTH GRINDER I was really hoping this would grab me by the throat. There are moments of speed and chaos and blast beats and there are a few slugged-out "wait for it" breakdowns, but it's mostly mid-paced, heavy, mosh-friendly hardcore more akin to COALESCE—which fits with the sterile studio recording. The artwork was either designed by that goth kid in your graphic design class, the night before it was due, or the "cool-hunters" at Urban Outfitters, armed with one brutal photo and an issue of Craphound. I really wanted to like this. FIL (Inkblot Records • 216 6th Ave. #3C • Brooklyn, NY 11215 • inkblotrecords.com)

#### FAMILY MAN • LP

Opening this record was a treat. Full color glossy poster, like a pin-up, of the band dressed as idiots, a very weird and funny photo shoot I don't get. But I was stoked. The poster and lyrics made me laugh, and also like the band more. Then there is another black and white photo on the sleeve where they all look like swing-kids or something, but I think maybe that was serious? Either way FAMILY MAN is a DIY band that play sort of typical hardcore, some of the wanky guitar parts remind me of more punk sounding NOMEANSNO, with a definite early-80s influenced BLACK FLAG sound, but more 'lite', not really in the anger/hardness of it, more in the musical part of it. This is good, and I think people would really like it. The lyrics range from more serious-sounding songs about social conditions and economics, to hilarious songs about surfing "leave-leave the country go surf, surf-surf for your life"; to just plain weird songs that are written well, and are interesting to read; "A is for animal, for the wolf in my genes, raven in

RIPSHIT



Photo By Fil

my head". Overall, it's energetic and unique even though it's not really doing anything new. It's worth a listen. GAB (mail@family-man.org)

#### FANG ISLAND • Sky Gardens EP CD

The energy of this band seems to hold up their music well. It comes off as hyperactive fun, yet this should be expected from a band that has performed in front of captivated kindergartners. "Curaga" starts the EP with a good intensity, and "The Absolute Place" begins in that same realm (only dragging towards the end, a bit.) The last song, though, seems to keep it up like a player piano that kicks in for the worn out band. They seem to be together with their sound, and not searching for a genre. If you want something good, fun, and quick, check this out. JM (Corleone Records • PO Box 65 • Providence, RI 02901 • corleonerecords.com)

#### FIRE TEAM CHARLIE • 7"

I think almost every time I've been sent a packet of recordings to review there is a FIRE TEAM CHARLIE release in the box! This 7" contains two tracks, "Battle Of Marathon" and "Golden Dragon." Side A has parts that remind me of some newer OFF MINOR songs and seemed pretty good. Side B, however, I found pretty disappointing. It's a lot more slow and melodic with almost all singing and sounds like it's a completely different band. I find this decision to include this track confusing. The Packaging is hand screened by hellfish. MM (Casey Power • 4444 Westheimer Rd. Apt. 144 • Houston, TX 77027)

#### FIRST BASE • Reach Out! CD

This is a CD of four tracks of pretty straightforward hardcore from Malaysia with vocals that alternate between yelling and singing. Definitely influenced by bands like BOLD as well as other older hardcore bands on Revelation. The music is pretty good but I wasn't wild about the vocals. CD comes with full lyrics. MM (hiddenvalue@gmail.com)

#### FISCHER • 7"

Played with these guys in a cramped radio show in San Luis Obispo a few months back and they certainly kicked out the jams, especially for a two-piece drums/guitar combo. Live, I remember hearing a dirtied-up pop punk thing going, reminiscent of THE GIBBONS or LAWRENCE ARMS; on record that still pretty much stands, but what shines brightest here is the rad quality of the vocals; at least at this moment, dude's up there with IDLE KIDS or maaaaaybe even LATTERMAN, and I generally don't throw LATTERMAN references around like they're Pop-Its, you know? Great 7-inch: laced with melancholy, but also enough big riffs and speed that I still want to tap my foot. I got really lucky with the batch of review material this time around. KR (Great Plains Records • 514 Broadway • Santa Cruz, CA 95060)

#### FIX MY HEAD • 7"

This looks like a bad-time-had-by-all late-90s COALESCE record, but

I've learned through reviewing for this zine that you shouldn't always judge a book by its cover. Such was the case here. Sometimes mid-paced but mostly fast hardcore, FIX MY HEAD quickly & efficiently spits out 7 paranoid ragers, with frantic-but-not-derailing vocals. Recommended. SP (Vinyl Addict Records • 1835 De Bourgoigne • Sherbrooke, Quebec, J1J 1B1 Canada • vinyladdictrecords.com)

#### FLAWS • Erect Nation LP

My cat requires my complete and full attention, she digs FLAWS. Her purr resonates most accurately with the amazing guitar and bass tones that this band has achieved on this record full of heavy riffs and compelling, intelligent rhythms. A+ on musicianship all around. CB (Obscurist Press • PO Box 13077 • Gainesville, FL 32604)

#### FOLIAGE • The Sound Machine CDR

This is an incredibly short EP of synth-featurin' screamin' Malaysian hardcore. Elements of the VSS and of other digitally inclined HC groups are prominent here, and maybe a little MUKILTEO FAIRIES vibe. I like it. The lyrics are vague and a bit obtuse, but heck, it's a pretty rockin' four and a half minutes. HM (Foliageband@gmail.com)

#### FOOT OX • It's Like Our Little Machine LP

FOOT OX is one lady from Portland and a million people backing her. It's punky folk closer to K Records style indie-pop than Plan-it-x folk punk, but her nasal vocals and upbeat songwriting definitely remind me of what I used to love about ROSA. The ensemble backing band definitely gives this an indie-rock feel, like HOP ALONG QUEEN ANSLEIS backed by an acoustic MODEST MOUSE with DUCK DUCK GREY DUCK playing accordion. I like it. GT (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

#### FOOT VILLAGE • Friendship Nation LP

This percussive experience is collected on an album written/screamed/sung...scrunged? under the method of primal scream therapy, or so it seems. FOOT VILLAGE sounds if all of its members decided for harmonies similar to muppets jazzing out over a massive plate of spaghetti (made of yarn, of course). It starts in this melodious way, then a mantra sets in with "Nothing is real." Then, the beats get beaten, as each member seems to bludgeon anything that makes a vibrating sound, when hit. They definitely work their voices into identifying the lyrics texture (anger, and brattiness), into the blasting thuds over what seems like NEIL PEART's drum kit...he's got enough for a whole band to share, I'd say. The first side is faster, louder, and more on point. Side two, in contrast, becomes strained & weary, a bit. I'm sure this is a group best served by their performance. "Friendship Nation" has parts that would stand out to impress some by it's tenacity for party/noise/drum/muppet?/destruction. JM (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)



### FOR DICK • demo CDR

OK, so I've narrowed it down. Either this guy is a fucked up agoraphobic genius, leaving the house only to buy cat food and sad burritos, or that self-satisfied v-necked mustache wearer that is in every bar ever, taking too long to cut a line in the bathroom. Whichever, I'm pretty into it in an "I'd never play this around my friends" sort of way. It's fucked-as-hell lurching homemade scumbag punk, lovingly packaged in what is essentially a piece of scrap paper. My copy even included an errant pube! SP (p.watt43@yahoo.com)

### FOR THE AGENDA • Non Von Neumann... TAPE

As far as I can tell, there is just one person responsible for the multi-instrumentation on this 15 song tape. It has a real "lite noise pop" feel to it, not unlike early SEBADOH or something along the lines of dudes who sit around in their rooms with 4 tracks for weeks at a time. That sounds like a cheap shot, but I have a soft spot in my heart for people with obsessions. Mostly, the songs aren't very engaging and seem like they would serve well as background music at an art show. You know, it's like, there's a lot of noodles in the pot, but the sauce is all fucked up. You know what I mean? GH (akropp@gmail.com)

### FRENCH QUARTER • LP

This is primarily very songwriter based, with that classy 4-track sound. It's personal, yet lyrically open to anyone/anything. I understand that lyrics become important when they are relevant and/or insightful to the listener, yet they feel too broad here. FQ plays with finger picking similar to RICHARD LLOYD and ELLIOTT SMITH. With light instrumentation, it feels as fluid as sipping lemonade; yet the songs come off as being a bit too moody for my taste. It's definitely more for background to an emotional situation, or an LP to be listened to for the singer's harmonizing. If you are into dialogue about kneescraps, and ARNE ZANK, then your tea is ready. JM (Gilgong Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

### FRIENDLY FIRE • demo 2008 CDR

From the hand-drawn artwork and the name, I was expecting some Brooklyn-via-East Bay style Cometbus worship, but instead was treated to some rough-hewn revolution summer style punk. Think: maybe RITES OF SPRING meets CURRENT? It's fitting in a purely geographical sense, being that they're from DC. Whatever, this is heart-on-sleeve emo-before-that-word-became-filthy basement music. I'm looking forward to more. SP (Friendly Fire • 1007 Monroe St. NW #3 • Washington, DC 20010)

### FUJICOLOR • demo CDR

This recording is four tracks of pretty noisy melodic screamo from Malaysia. This demo is from 2007. If you are into bands like PORTRAITS OF PAST, EUCALYPT and RAEIN you would definitely like this. One of the most intriguing things about this demo is the lyric sheet. It is hand written lyrics on a printed napkin! Something I have never seen before. I'm not even sure how you print on a napkin without it being destroyed, I am pretty intrigued. Unfortunately I think this band has decided to call it quits, but if you come across this demo it is a good find for sure. MM (Swarm of Nails Records • swarmofnails.new.fr)

### FUTURE PHONES • 7"

It's refreshing to get records to review that are difficult to describe. I only wish more punk records were as tough to pin down. The only thing that I can think of to compare this to is maybe a cross between HUGGY BEAR/RED MONKEY kind of stuff and FISTICUFF'S BLUFF. It's got some interesting angular stuff going on, but it's punk and fun. Features members of EMPTY BUILDINGS, PILLOW FIGHT FIGHT, and DIRTY DIRTY. Highly recommended for those of us who love punk, but maybe get bored with Punk sometimes, too. FIL (Future Phones c/o Tim • PO Box 20351 • Seattle, WA 98102)

### GET BENT • Demo CDR

I know that someone somewhere loves this band and sings along to every word when they play live, but it's just not for me. It's all there: Raspy voices, mid-tempo songs with good breakdowns, great musicianship, and a really nice sounding recording. It's all just floating right by me without sinking its hooks in. I get the same feeling when I drive

through Iowa. GH (Jared • 60-59 Myrtle Ave • Ridgewood, NY 11385 • jared.santiago@gmail.com)

### GET BENT/JEAN CLAUDE JAM BAND • split 7"

One song from each pop-punkish band on each side, each lyrically addressing the narrator's current life situation while reminiscing about the nuances of past love and seasons and situations. GET BENT (from New York state) gives us a DILLINGER 4-esque catchy pop-punk song, which is the stronger of the two, although the JEAN CLAUDE JAM BAND laid-back croonier side is good, too. It has two excessive guitar solos in one song. Bold move, my friends. Bold move. JG (Kiss Of Death Records • PO Box 75550 • Tampa, FL 33675 • kissofdeathrecords.com)

### GHOSTLIMB • Bearing & Distance LP

A nicely presented gatefold LP of frenzied mini-epics. Angry, down-tuned, and seemingly at the intersection of brutality and melody. Ugh, did I really just refer to a hardcore band as brutal? Shit. I'm told that this is someone or other from GRAFORLOCK, and seems to be, if not in that ballpark, then at least in the same sports league. SP (Adagio 830 • Marchlewski Str 107 • 10243 Berlin • Germany • adagio830.de)

### GIT SOME • Cosmic Rock CD

This band has some huge sounding riffs that aren't simply defined so much by their tone and recording quality but with big hits on the downbeats that proceed then to bend and twist around fret boards, then interplay with rock and roll guitar based hooks backed by straight forward drumming that makes me think this band would do well if they were really loud and playing a drunken Richmond basement show. In that setting it would also excuse the fact that all these songs start to sound the same, and tend to drag on. Also, I'm pretty sure its been established before that art depicting women with spread legs and a demon or something between them is incredibly stupid. DK (1234gorerecords.com)

### GLASS AND ASHES • CD

Dude, what the hell am I supposed to do here? These guys are friends of mine. I've done a record cover and half a dozen shirt designs for em over the years. They've stayed at my house. Nice one, Give Me Back. Looks like you can hithertofore kiss your "journalistic integrity" goodbye. Luckily there's no need for smoke-blowing; the record really is pretty goddamned stunning. Not even counting the fact that this one comes across as flat-out epic as fuck, there's a sense of clarity here that, to me at least, was missing from their last full-length, *Aesthetic Arrest*, and even that record was pretty awesome at times. But that clarity, that sense of directness, helps this new one flow seamlessly. From the punch-in-the-mouth opening track "Seconds Before The Floor Drops Out" to the feedback-laced closer "The Rebuttal," this is a band that's coming up with some of the most dense, crazed, versatile music I've heard in a long time—best I can come up with is PLANES MISTAK-

EN FOR STARS and early BOTCH matching TORCHES TO ROME shot for shot. Couple all that with whip-smart lyrics laced with bleak metaphors and stark imagery, frenzied instrumental interplay and an overall feeling of tension that just does not let up until the end, and this one comes out as golden. Grab it up. KR (No Idea! • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL 32604-4636 • noidearecords.com)

### GLOBAL HOLOCAUST • Unequal Justice 7"

This is Profane Existence type d-beat crust complete with arguing demon style vocals, double bass (the drummer is really good) and simplistic three-chord guitar work. They reside in Montreal and have been around for almost 10 years now. This does nothing for me, but crusties will circle pit their ass flaps off this. KMK (Rotten to the Core Records c/o Robert Janis • 3300 W Ave J3 • Lancaster, CA • 93536)

### GRAVE, SHOVEL...LET'S GO!/MEANDGOLI-ATH • split 7"

If the legend were true that Eskimos had 100 words for snow, then I would imagine that Europeans would have at least as many for Emo and Screamo. I could really use those sometimes, like right now, when trying to describe the subtleties of records like these. The words that I have don't do them justice. Even though I used to be really into this kind of music, I feel like a lot of my references are outdated and overused, but I can still recognize a great record when I hear one. This is one of those records where every element seems intentional and it all works together to create a solid, cohesive document. It's always nice when two bands can balance each other out well without sounding too similar. This is a great split for fans of stuff like YAGE, STOP IT!!, OFF MINOR, etc. FIL (Asymmetrie • asymmetrie@gmx.net)

### GRINDING HALT • Spookjeshof 12"

Down tuned crust metal from the Netherlands that sounds a lot like HIS HERO IS GONE minus the low, angry "Todd" vocals. The singer keeps it high pitched and pissed off. There are the typical softer acoustical breaks and then back into the feedback and heavy guitars that these kinds of bands play around with all the time. The lyric sheet has English explanations to all the songs which is great for idiots like me. I'm not trying to slam these guys, but I really don't find this very exciting. This is a split release on 3 Euro labels: React with Protest, Shove Records, and DeGraanrepubliek. KMK (DeGraanrepubliek • degraanrepubliek.com)

### THE GUILT • demo TAPE

DC mid-paced hardcore dealing heavily with issues of guilt. Sweet concept. Reminds me of CARRY ON although the riffs sometimes get cheesy in a chugga chugga/technical kind of way. Overall, though, pretty good. JG (The Guilt • 4712 Alton Place NW • Washington, DC 20016 • jamesdoubek@gmail.com)



UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND

Photo BY DAVE SANDERS



## HAMMERLORD • CD

There is definitely a large resurgence of two things these days: thrash, and over-the-top metal. I'm certainly not going to complain about either one, but that does mean that there will be a lot of output in both departments. The good news about Hammerlord is that you will not be misled as to what is going on here. Though I have to say that I was not quite expecting this interpretation. The band has a sound that seems to come from more of a metalcore/hxc background than straight metal or thrash. For the most part, the double bass pedal drums are constantly firing off rounds. The guitars chug often, and every now and then throw out tech grind parts reminiscent of groups like THE RED CHORD. As for the vocals, it took me a minute to place them, and then I realized: INDECISION. They are a dead ringer for that sound. On the plus side, they are all very skilled musicians; it does take a lot of practice (even vocally) to do this sort of think properly and tight. And the album does have a very well produced sound. However, especially since this is a style of music I listen to often, I think it may be either a bit too schizophrenic or distant from the genre it purports to be a part of. I'm not sure that someone hearing this offhand would want to call it thrash metal. Though they certainly try to pull out all the stops, from the MANOWAR inspired lyrics, to a cover featuring: a voluptuous woman in an armor bikini wielding a hammer, skulls, wolves, lighting, and a crow. DEN (Init Records)

## HEATHERS • Here, Not There CD

Remember that 90s female fronted alt-folk band FRENTE? They covered "Bizarre Love Triangle." It was on the radio! No? Apparently I'm the only one. HEATHERS are twin sisters from Ireland who sound so much like FRENTE, I would have thought this was a reunion record if it weren't for the teenage folk-punk energy these kids have. Think a stripped down CRANBERRIES with ripped clothes and choppy haircuts, collage artwork, playing BREAD AND ROSES paced folk songs and you've got HEATHERS. GT (Plan-it X Records • PO Box 14001 • Gainesville, FL 32604 • plan-it-x.com)

## HERDS • demo TAPE

Damn. This completely destroys! HERDS are from Milwaukee, but some of these guys are originally from Chicago and played in CHARLES BRONSON, KUNG FU RICK and some other bands. However, this sounds nothing like their previous efforts. There is a great mix of fast and mid-paced songs on here and the six songs go by pretty quickly. Harsh, raw, and punishing this is some savage sounding hardcore...and that's what it is: not metal, not punk, this is pure fucking hardcore the way it was meant to be played. I could say they sound like this or that, etc, but this is a demo and odds are they haven't found their true sound quite yet so I won't pigeonhole them into that. They have two 7"s coming out very soon and I am excited to get them both. I hope they re-record some of the songs on the demo because there is always that difference that studio recording makes and I would really love to hear a proper version of "The Seas". This is a great demo and if you can pick one up, get it. KMK (herdsmilwaukee@yahoo.com)

## "HEY GIRL" • 7"

I was psyched because I thought this was a record from the band HEY, GIRL! but it's actually a concept record/comic zine about getting revenge on creepy dudes who holler at women on the bus or hit on you at the bar, etc. Heavy bluesy indie rock a la DES ARK, interspersed with spoken word skits, an instrumental banjo song and some piano. I just put down the BLACK RAINBOW 7"/zine before putting this on thinking "I wish more bands would do this," and strangely my wish came true. Awesome. GT (available from Dischord)

## HOMICIDE/MC HOMELESS • Split 12"

The HOMICIDE is pretty straightforward Indonesian political hip-hop. Ok, I've never heard any Indonesian political hip-hop before so my expertise is pretty dubious. It's not bad. The production is decent, sound-wise, but the tracks are kinda monotonous (but not in the satisfying way that, say, THE ROOTS have used vocal monotony to anchor a rhythm). The liner notes give the lyrics in the original language, but I don't know which of the 737 mother tongues spoken by Indonesians this is. There are also English-language summaries of the songs and a

statement about the songs as a group. The running themes through them are anti-globalisation sentiment, skepticism of the sort of 'chauvinistic patriotism' by which the Bush administration created an us vs. them mentality to promote the 'war on terror', and the intellectual distortions inherent in that term itself. All this said, it's pretty difficult to comment on the content of music in a language I don't even remotely comprehend. The summaries are well written and articulate, but I dunno how good the lyrics are. The music isn't really enough my thing to make me listen to it despite the language barrier, though. Also I don't really know what the state of Indonesian hip-hop is these days (or any). In the States, the sub-WU TANG tracks and scratching would come off as anachronistic, but you gotta know the context to evaluate these things properly. The MC HOMELESS side is less encouraging. The tracks are (further 90s references) kind of underwhelming. Think 'The Score' by THE FUGEES, in terms of spare beats with a single repeated sample as an instrumental hook and occasional, incidental textural sounds. I felt like THE FUGEES pulled it off in '96 but those beats don't really hold up too well today. There's a cool busy drum break in the second track, though that plays against a legato horn sample. MC Homeless and his guest MCs on the record have kind of uninteresting flows. There's kind of an AESOP ROCK-esque rhythmic plodding going on but without the tonal and pitch variations that made AESOP ROCK singles like 'Daylight' so awesome (well that and the really great, subtly constructed tracks). Where HOMICIDE seems to have a focused message, MC HOMELESS' tracks on this split seem to come from a place of despair. That's a fine place for art to come from, but the rhythmic and tonal monotony of the flows don't make the confrontation with the MCs ennui terribly satisfying. The artwork, particularly for the MC Homeless side, is beautiful, though, and reminiscent of 'Let's Take It To The Stage'-era Funkadelic album art. And even if I'm not that jazzed about the music, well, a DIY split between an East Coast (I think) US MC and a group of Indonesian rappers is pretty sweet, and a counter to the kind of globalization HOMICIDE opposes. That's rad. HM (Champagne Records/dis.eased wreckkids; SE Asian distribution by Prohibited Projects)

## HOT WATER MUSIC • Till the Wheels Fall Off CD

The good news is that my favorite HWM material, the *Moonpies for Misfits* 7", is on this collection. So visceral & heartfelt, it was at the time Florida's answer to LEATHERFACE's gruff melody. A great record, for sure. The bad news is a little more grim, and it can be summed up in one phrase: Epitaph era HWM. Maybe this is off-base, but to my "casual & very occasional appreciator" ears, a lot of the charm & urgency is lost in their bigger recording budget. I'm not trying to be overly dogmatic or raise any sort of "sellout" flags here; the heart is very much still in it, but the edges are dulled. The collection is rounded out with a grip of covers, some (The Boss) packing more of a punch than others (LEATHERFACE, THE CLASH). SP (No Idea! • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL 32604-4636 • noidearecords.com)

## HUMAN HOST • The Halloween Tree CD

This is completely crazy and I didn't expect this at all. HUMAN HOST is made up of ex-members of CHARM CITY SUICIDES and describing this properly is going to be very difficult. The first thing that immediately came to my mind when I pressed play, was some kind of a digital version of DIO or some band like FOREIGNER or maybe even AC/DC. At times this sounds almost power-metal without being metal at all. Confused yet? I am. I think that's because of the theatric singing or the driving beat, but honestly this is just electronic, psychedelic, folklore music. Somehow 11 people collaborated on this, but to me it sounds like 2 guys singing with a keyboard. Yet for some reason I can't turn away...There is a lot of trippy, dreamy, spaced out shit going on laced with spoken word and hip hop beats, etc, etc. Digital DIO, haha...I am so clever. KMK (Terra Firma Records • 8316 Loch Raven Blvd. • Towson, MD 21286 • terrafirmarecords.com)

## I MADE THIS MISTAKE • It's Okay LP

DC 1986? Midwest 1994? Maybe both at once. Think ONE LAST WISH meets CAP'N JAZZ: Guy fronting BRAID on trucker speed. This is great, balancing desperation & fun. I think they're from Florida? I'd like to know more about this band, since it's possibly the nicest surprise in my review pile. SP (Cottage Records • 816 Mosley St. • Tallahassee, FL 32310 • thecottagerecords.com)

## IMPERIAL LEATHER • Do You Know Where Your Children Are? CD

I like IMPERIAL LEATHER. They're like a tougher more Swedish AVENGERS. They're not as catchy as the AVENGERS and they barely ever change up the pace on their records, but hey... Solid old-school punk through and through, this is a good follow up to their last full length. Not distinctly different but just as good. GT (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • profaneexistence.com)

## IN FIRST PERSON /STORM THE BASTILLE • split LP

The IN FIRST PERSON tracks start us off with some pretty heavy metallic influenced hardcore. This band features members of THIS SHIP WILL SINK and PYRAMIDS. Their side of the split contains four new tracks. The recording sounds really heavy and thick. I really like how the drums sound on this record, really furious and punishing. The guitars and bass blend well with the drums creating a really loud wall of sound. It is always great to see this band play live and I think the songs on this split are my favorite ones they have recorded so far. A really solid set of songs. STORM THE BASTILLE is from New York and gives us five songs of punishing chaotic hardcore. While there are definite similarities in the music of both bands I feel like the vocals for STORM THE BASTILLE are a little crustier. Both sides of this split race by barely leaving any time to breathe in-between. Definitely recommended! MM (Protagonist • PO Box 64574 • Tucson, AZ 85728)

## IN FIRST PERSON/TITAN • split 7"

A quick and efficient review of a record made by people that I respect: IFP features folks from THE ASSISTANT, WRONG DAY TO QUIT, PYRAMIDS, and probably a glut of other political hardcore bands from the Jersey/Philly area. On this record, they're playing some thick, pissed off, marginally epic sounding hardcore, in the European, DAITRO-IVICH-FINGERPRINT mold. TITAN is more straightforward downtuned chuggery, dual-vocalled and sharing some common ground with bands like CATHARSIS & TRIAL. It calls to mind black skies & dreary deserted shit-town railyards. This split oozes sincerity from two bands very well suited to each other. SP (Inkblot Records • 216 6th Ave. #3C • Brooklyn, NY 11215 • inkblotrecords.com)

## INTERNATIONAL SUPERHEROES OF HARD-CORE • Takin' It Ova LP

Another fine addition to the Bridge Nine section of your local landfill with a joke record that wishes that GOOD CLEAN FUN hadn't already happened. Not quite as funny as the members' "real" attempts at Warped Tour hardcore, but I have to admit that there's one OK song on here called "Superhero Sellouts." The idea of talking shit on all the Hollywood comic-book heroes did get a little chuckle out of me, but the bar was pretty low. A couple songs later they hit rock bottom with "Dirty Mouth," pushing conservative Christian values with anti-cussing propaganda. And just like your parents, they refuse to address the "why?" question, and instead just jokingly threaten violence. Ugh. Fuck you, Sneaky Jesus, I do what I want. FIL (Bridge Nine Records • 119R Foster St. Bldg. 4, Suite 3 • Peabody, MA 01960 • bridge9.com)

## IRON HAND • demo TAPE

This is a nice demo release from these Connecticut boys. I hate CDR demos and I was really glad this was a tape. It has a nice printed inlay card w/ lyrics and a live photo. Musically these guys remind me of BORN DEAD ICONS. They have a raw, down tuned d-beat sound with melodic guitar leads thrown in to keep it interesting. This is a great first release, but can they keep it fresh sounding on an LP? KMK (Iron Hand • 32 Fairview ave • Middletown, CT 06457 • Brian.Frenette@gmail.com)

## JACOB BERENDES • Foreign Policy CD

I've had the honor of seeing Jacob play live twice now and I was pretty stoked to see this CD in the bag of review items. Jacob is a tall, skinny, older punk with an easy to spot spark about him. I liked him after the first few seconds of looking at him before he struck his first chord. He plays solo with a homemade electric guitar through a tiny amp (he says he won't play with or through anything he can't carry on foot to the



show). He is equal parts punk comedian and songwriter. His songs are deep and meaningful and funny as fuck at the same time. My only complaint is the recording. It's pretty low-fi and there is too much reverb on this record. It takes away from the clarity of the lyrics. I love low-fi recordings but not when it muddles the music. If you can see him live, do it. If you can't this CD is the next best thing. CC (Corleone Records • PO Box 65 • Providence, RI 02901 • corleonerecords.com)

### JACUZZI SUICIDE • 7"

My first thought upon looking at this 7" and putting it on for the first listen was "is this a joke?" While listening to this record, it seems like I am at a 2009 hair metal revival concert with MOTLEY CRUE and WARRANT playing. I feel like this band would be the opening band on a show like that. There are a lot of 80s trashy glam rock riffs, leather pants, and aviator sunglasses, and lots of hairspray. It also seems like the type of music that would be played by the people interviewed in heavy metal parking lot, especially the guy in the zebra outfit. The only difference being that I really enjoy watching heavy metal parking lot. For fans of 80s metal party rock MM (Humdinger Records • 38 Mulberry St. • Asheville, NC 28804 • sonikmatsuri@hotmail.com)

### THE JAMMY DODGERS • Skive Off CD

THE JAMMY DODGERS were a short lived lo fi pop punk band from Gainesville, FL featuring Chris Clavin of GHOST MICE. If you're familiar Chris's previous pop punk stuff (THE DEVIL IS ELECTIC, OPERATION: CLIFF CLAVIN, etc), this sticks to a pretty familiar formula—short topical political songs—but JAMMY DODGERS strip it down to the bone. Songs like "God Hates Fred Phelps," and "Gentrify An Arrow Straight Through Your Head" make their point bluntly, incorporating the snark and sass of BLATZ and THE DEAD KENNEDYS. The best part of this record is the samples, including a sweet one from The Weather Underground documentary—"Doing nothing in a period of repressive violence is itself a form of violence." Strangely, the CD ends with a compilation of spoken word pieces from the band's friends that range from tepid fanzine readings to embarrassing poetry. GT (Rock-it-Records • PO Box 14001 • Gainesville, FL 32604)

### JERK ALERT • Dirty Slurs LP

I can't imagine a world in which bands like these didn't exist. This LP is a fucking trainwreck in the best way possible; think BLATZ & FYP, trashcan recording & a lot of cheap beer and drugs. This is poppy youth aggression, and I don't just want to be able to see this band, I want to fucking be in this band. SP (Eradicator Records • 522 West 4th St. • Bloomington, IN 47404)

### JOEY CORMAN • Morgue Pt. III CDR

Fil, do you think this is funny, sending me this shit? I guess this is a

demo. Fuck if I know. This is complete fucking garbage. It's some dude, Joey. I am assuming, singing and playing his acoustic guitar in his bedroom. It's not slow hippy shit though. It is mostly upbeat tracks. Luckily there are only 4 songs to endure. By the way, when this ended, I immediately placed it straight in the trash. Hey Joey Corman, fuck off. KMK (OBZ Records • 11777 Brazos Way • Lindale, Tx 75771)

### JONATHAN VASSAR • The Hours and the Days CD

Mellow, clean country music at a TOM WAITS pace. Sounds more bored than I am. FIL (Triple Stamp Records • triplestamp.com)

### JUDGE DREAD • Death Rattle EP

This sounds almost exactly like older FROM ASHES RISE. These guys aren't reinventing the wheel, but they're definitely pretty good at what they do. The problem is the whole delivery, right down to the band name and even the graphics on the cover and label art, have been done over and over and there's not anything setting this band apart. RQ (Judge Dread • 78 Moores Dr. • Mount Pearl, NL • A1N 3V1 Canada)

### KAH-ROE-SHI • Shi CD

Very heavy, very downtuned political hardcore from Malaysia. I'm a sucker for long write-ups and song explanations, which this band sure as shit has no shortage of. This wouldn't be out of place on the *Whispers* compilation, but standare fare crust this is not: there are definite elements of a more complex heaviness, along the lines of Enemy of the Sun era NEUROSIS, or maybe if COUNTERBLAST weren't so tedious. SP (Kid • 28-01-15 Flat DBKL • Gombak Fasa 2 • Gombak Setia • 53100 Kuala Lumpur • Malaysia • unionofslaves@gmail.com)

### KAKISTOCRACY • An Apology 7"

After releasing an LP on Profane Existence a few years back and returning from a European tour, I had not heard much from these mountain punks until a few months ago when they simultaneously released a split EP with NUX VOMICA and this 7". KAKISTOCRACY comes from Asheville, North Carolina and you should be kicking yourself if you missed them on their past United States tour. This record to me sounds like early FROM ASHES RISE before they moved away from Tennessee. What that essentially means is that this is fast straightforward melodic crust that does not sound overly polished and produced. This record has it all, driving metallic parts, nice leads, and some parts that are absolutely crushing. The lyrics are no doubt political but written from a personal perspective including an adaptation of a poem from Weather Underground member Laura Whitehorn. BN (Humdinger Records • 38 Mulberry St. • Asheville, NC 28804 • sonikmatsuri@hotmail.com)

### KAKISTOCRACY/ NUX VOMICA • split 7"

KAKISTOCRACY is one of those bands that I have always heard

about, but for some reason I have never listened to. Musically, this is dirty and ugly sounding hardcore in the vein of HIS HERO IS GONE, but much less crust-metal sounding than HHIG and with a bit more melody. There are only two songs here and they are nice mid tempo blasts. Flip it over and we have NUX VOMICA who I have never heard until now. This starts with heavy, fuzzed-out bass and slow, plodding drums that kick along until it picks up into a nice death crawl. Then it launches into a mid-paced chugga chugga attack, complete with crazed vocals and a nice d-beat bridge. This too is similar to HHIG or TRAGEDY. Sometimes this shit is so played out, but both of these bands play this style very well. KMK (Humdinger Records • 38 Mulberry St. • Asheville, NC 28804 • sonikmatsuri@hotmail.com)

### KATIE THE PEST & STERLING SAYS • Split 7"

It's not bad to hear good, noisy power-pop these days. Even when lyrics can border on saccharine calls of emotional need, there's usually a pass (due to the high excitement of the song.) The sound (on both sides, respectively) is a good ol' slice of nice guitar jangle. With KATIE THE PEST's side, it reminds me of BROKEN SIREN, yet everything one could dream of in late 80s British shoegaze pop hooks. STERLING SAYS reminds me of good guitar energy, perforated with the garage repetition that MANNEQUIN MEN use in their songs. Thouroughly enjoyable. Both sides play well into each other, warranting more blissful listening. JM (Commodity Fetish Records • 3400 Valley Dr. #44 • Manhattan Beach, CA 90266)

### KIAS FANSURI • Dua Tahun Pertama CD

This is a Euro-style DIY hardcore band from Malaysia, at times reminiscent of the likes of LA QUIETE & RAEIN, with the sort of lyrical vagueries & poeticism that befits the style. SP (Quiet Still Dead Records • quietstilldeadrecords@yahoo.com)

### KIDS EXPLODE/SOLEMN LEAGUE • split 7"

The insert was a mystery to me. Why—when compared to the cover art—is it so visually incongruent? Why does it look like that one KARANAT record? I guess SOLEMN LEAGUE is going for that same disaffected indie sound, but is that really why the insert looks like it was stuffed in the wrong record? KIDS EXPLODE offer one original of STOP IT!! styled screamo, and one remix. Cool cover art, but it's downhill from there. FIL (Asymmetric • asymmetric@gmx.net)

### KILLER DREAMER • 12" & 1000 Years... 12"

First of all, the 45rpm twelve-inch record is the finest format there is. Here are two such records from San Pedro's Killer Dreamer. Both rip. Trashy punk that's ugly enough to remind me of RUDIMENTARY PENI and early SST records while managing to stay tuneful enough to stick with me and demand repeated listens. Two facts: one, this band is excellent live, and, two, though the artwork is excellent, you probably shouldn't buy these for the lyrics, which are largely about monsters and stuff. Fuck it, three facts: years ago I was on tour and these guys gave my old band a copy of their CD. When we got home, we fought over it. I lost. Dang. RQ (Killer Dreamer • PO Box 282 • San Pedro, CA 90733)

### KISS THE BOTTLE • 9"

I'm not going to lie, I was skeptical when I opened up my packet of records and saw that a band had lifted their name from one of my favorite JAWBREAKER songs. Nonetheless I told myself I would give this band a shot so here we go. KISS THE BOTTLE from France sounds to me a whole lot like the nineties. KISS THE BOTTLE plays slow to mid-tempo screamo/punk that sounds a bit like FOUR HUNDRED YEARS. The lyrics are entirely in French and the three years of French that I took in the late nineties were not enough to help me decipher a single word on the inside of this record, but from what I can gather this band is rather political. For example, the note that accompanied the record was written on the back of a flyer for an upcoming demo in France. The packaging of this record is beautifully done with screen-printed cardstock that compliments an already beautiful record. BN (Kiss The Bottle c/o Yann Le Fur • 48-Rue Montgolfier • 33000 Bordeaux • France)



MEH-KAGO N.T.

Photo By Fil





### KURSK/ LYCANTHROPY • Split 7"

This split 7" pairs up two greatly underappreciated international hardcore bands. On one side is KURSK who is one of many great bands coming out of Winnipeg in the past few years. I was totally unprepared for how brutal this band was. Completely chaotic, manic metallic hardcore with a significant grindcore influence. This side is absolutely relentless and brutal with some really nice dark lyrics. On the other side of this record is LYCANTHROPY from the Czech Republic. LYCANTHROPY plays brutal fastcore/grindcore with male female vocals. I would put this record somewhere in between AGATHOCLES and 625 records. Straight-forward political lyrics dealing with issues such as vegetarianism/veganism, fur farms, and religion. This record also looks phenomenal with a bleak silver on black printed sleeve. A great pairing of two bands that you should check out ASAP. BN (Halo of Flies Records • 430 E. Lloyd St. • Milwaukee, WI 53212 • halooffliesrods@hotmail.com)

### LA CARA OCULTA • TAPE

This cassette sounds like it was recorded on a boom box during a band practice. But, once you get past the first few seconds of hiss you forget all about that and you start nodding your head and thinking about circle pits. The lyrics are in Spanish and there is no lyric sheet so I'm not sure what the songs are about. The music is old school hard rocking catchy punk with a little rock and roll thrown in. It's fun. It's fast and the best part of all, it's FREE. All they want you to do is write them a letter. CC (TPV records • 627 1/2 SW 12th St. • Gainesville, FL 32601)

### LAHAR • Obeti Doby CD

1000 MPH ThrashGrindGo! Here we have LAHAR from the Czech Republic with a blistering fast 1-2-1-2 attack featuring thrashing KREATOR style guitar work that goes right into upbeat, fast hardcore punk. This is a great mix of thrash and fastcore that charges ahead fast and furious with nonstop tempo changes and pissed off vocals. Not a word of this is in English so I have no idea what they are saying. Please do not let the goofy "NUCLEAR ASSAULT" style cover art fool you or steer you away from this. It rules and there are a million bands playing this style that wish they were even 1/2 as good as LAHAR. KMK (Damage Done Records • damagedonerecords.com)

### LANTERNS • Apocalypse Youth CD

The cover photos say it all: skinny emo rockers at the beach stare longingly toward the sunset. Sounds like Saddle Creek records in the vein of CURSIVE. If this is what the apocalypse is going to sound like, I imagine it'll leave the whole world asking "wait, was that it?" FIL (beartrapp.com)

### LAST LIGHTS • 7"

Mid-tempo to upbeat, slick sounding posicore kind of like KID DY-NAMITE, AMERICAN NIGHTMARE, or AMENDMENT 18. This is

better than those bands though because it sounds more urgent, fierce, and genuine. The singer has a great voice for this style and there are some rad guitar leads and 1 or 2 sick breakdowns tossed in. I don't love this, but it is a solid release. KMK (Mightier Than Sword Records • 756 Myrtle Avenue #4-O • Brooklyn, NY 11206 • mtsrecords.com)

### LIBYANS • Welcome To the Neighborhood 7"

The chorus to Side A is like an homage to THE AVENGERS, reinforced visually by mock Dangerhouse labels. The vocal hook is undeniably infectious. It's a nice contrast to the verses and the other two songs, which are a little more straightforward and aggressive in an early-80s hardcore way. What sets them ahead of the pack, for me, is their super-hyper drummer who throws in crazy-fast fills anytime they get the chance. FIL (Shock To the System)

### LITTLE LUNGS • Hoist Me Up CDEP

I recently saw Little Lungs play a show in Massachusetts and this CD is a great documentation of what I saw at that show. Seven songs of really high energy driving pop punk. These songs are so good and so catchy they will get stuck in your head for days and everytime you want to sing along! If you like bands like CHEEKY, and you like the driving guitar lines of bands like SUPERCHUNK you will love this! Can't wait to hear more material from this band. This material is now released on a 7" on Salinas - a must have! MM (Jacki Sulley • 27 Robinson St. • First Floor • New Brunswick, NJ 08901 • littlelungsnynj@hotmail.com)

### LITTLE WOMEN • Teeth 12"

I picked this up because of the CROM-TECH artwork on the cover and it turns out it was actually done by Mick Barr. Even though he's not in this band, it did give me an idea of what to expect from this. Not metal, though, just avant-garde. Sounds like punks playing free jazz. Like an instrumental COUNTDOWN TO PUTSCH or what you'd expect to hear at 4am on college radio. It grew on me as a coffee substitute, however, in the context of a one-sided avant-garde noise record with no song titles, there's something humorous about the presence of a copyright symbol. Really? REALLY? Who exactly are you afraid is going to pirate this? FIL (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

### MADE AUSTRIA • Beer Metal Sex Guitar DVD

Oh fuck yeah. This has to be my all time favorite a cappella hair-metal band from Australia! The lazy comparison would be JUD JUD, but this is way better because there are lyrics, which are fucking hilarious. It's pretty short, but the live video is pretty amazing; they wear sweet outfits and really REALLY get into what they're doing, and eventually the camera pans to an audience of confused stares. Ahead of their time. This is priceless. FIL (Made Austria • 55 Railway Place • Coburg • Victoria 3058, Australia • madeaustria@hotmail.com)

### MAGIC OF THE RAINBOW • Demo TAPE

I know I listened to this tape on my stereo a while ago and I don't remember it leaving much of an impression on me, but right now—listening to it on my walkman while riding my bike through some hail, on a bright, stormy day in April—it sounds perfect. Sounds like 1993 or 1994, when for some people, "emo" still meant a type of hardcore—scrawny kids playing house shows with a sense of urgency and very little pretension. The vocals aren't screamed or sung, they're a little frantic and desperate and always seem almost out of breath. The guitars are nice and thin and fast like that one TEN BOY SUMMER song. FIL (asymmetrie@gmx.net)

### MARRIED IN BIRDICHEV • 7"

Holy shit! Go get this! It has looping! It has vocal platitudes that chant, whisper in sweet vibrations, and tell a story with (mostly) appropriately placed vocal intonation!...blah, blah. Brittany Gould's vocal/noise project (MIB) is solid from side to side on this 7". The sound is as cold as walking through a snowy landscape towards the northern lights, while cantankerously feeling your world split and fracture with electronic phasing that warms the back of one's eyelids...pleasantly. I played this for multiple people, who automatically converted to it, as if it were a manual for the cult of MIB. JM (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

### MASATO TANAKA/POCKET GALLOWS • split LP

MASATO TANAKA do the whole grinding violence with droning, interrupting keyboards thing, not totally unlike early AN ALBATROSS or THE LOCUST. The keys at times sound like a sick circus that distracts and adds a little silliness to the proceedings. I don't think that I should like this at all, but I do. Don't tell anyone. POCKET GALLOWS are on the different side of a similar coin. Similar in their unsettlingly violent vibe, but the keyboards are used in a less punctuated, more droney & drawn out manner. Cool screened covers. SP (Square of Opposition Records c/o Chris Regec • 2935 Fairview St. • Bethlehem, PA 18020 • squareofopposition.com)

### THE MEASURE [SA] • Means To An End 7"

Lauren Measure's got soul, man. Don't have much to say about the B side—a couple really short tracks that seem fairly tacked on—but the title track has undoubtedly got some depth to it. Her vocals come across as both vulnerable and tough as hell and the song—regret literally set to catchiness for about ninety wonderful seconds—is awesome. As far as that particular song goes, you could call em "pop punk" and be about half right. If you called em "pop punk loaded with brains and heart," you'd be getting a lot closer. They haven't entirely sold me off the strength of this one record, but they've definitely proved they're capable of writing great songs. KR (Salinas Records • PO Box 20996 • Ferndale, MI 48220)

### THE MEASURE [SA] • Old Crow 7"

I feel like there's a new MEASURE record every time I turn around. The song "Old Crow" is a tender, yet broken hearted song about losing your love and trying to move on. It has a nice, loose, drunk-at-3am feel to it (or do I need a new record needle?). It's familiar, warm and lonesome. My friend, Marco, co-wrote and co-sung it and who knew he had such a great tender voice? Great job. Side 2 starts off fast, chaotic and shouting about drinking and catching up with long lost friends. The last song is a cover of a band called SOLTERO, who I've never heard. The song totally rules. I'm a sucker for sixteenth beats and catchy choruses, which is what this song is full of. I've never paid too much attention to THE MEASURE [SA], but this 7" has changed my ways. GH (Los Diaper Records • losdiaperrecords@gmail.com)

### THE MEASURE [SA] • One Chapter in the Book CD

THE MEASURE is one of those new crop of pop punk bands I've been hearing so much about but have a difficult time differentiating from each other. Which isn't to say that I've been disappointed with any of them, just not blown away. This CD is a collection of songs from the many beautifully illustrated 7"s they've put out over the past couple of years. It's folk-influenced Bay Area style pop punk (strangely they're from New Jersey) with sleepy, intimate lyrics about broken down relationships, living in a nowhere town, moving away, and drinking. It's like I



CHURCH meets the POGUES but with nerdy girl vocals and occasional boy/girl interplay \*cough\* LEMURIA. Awesome? Sure. It's awesome. GT (Southern Lovin' • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL • 32604)

### MEHKAGO N.T. • Human Extinction 7"

Distort Miami, all crusties spending loud night! This is Scandi-via-Japan-via-Miami all-out terror. Think PISSCHRIST but somehow much more pissed the fuck off. Highly, highly recommended. SP (\$5ppd Vinyl) Rites • PO Box 924 • Gainesville, FL 32602 • vinylrites@gmail.com)

### MEISCE • Shipwrecked In A Bottle CD

Pretty passable Celtic stuff ala THE DOLOMITES or, yeah, THE POGUES. At times it comes across a little stiff—some of the swagger of FILTHY THEIVING BASTARDS would've gone a long way here—but generally, it's solid. There's an influx of punks now encroaching into other—oftentimes more "traditional"—genres that's turning out to be pretty interesting as of late, be it folk, bluegrass, or this kind of stuff. It's interesting to see people carrying common punk themes (getting wasted, pointed anti-authoritarianism, labor politics) into areas where lyrics like "fuck the system" just aren't gonna pull it. Nice job. KR (Fistolo Records • PO Box 2836 • Upper Darby, PA 19082 • fistolo.com)

### THE MELTDOWNS • Them Letdowns CDR

Ugh, I don't write for *Rolling Stone*, why was this sent to me? SP (themeltdowns.com)

### MEMORIAL • LP

This is the kind of record that our "no barcode policy" is supposed to weed out. It's been a long, long time since I've listened to QUICKSAND or SENSEFIELD, but that's the closest reference point I can think of besides maybe an updated TEMPLE OF THE DOG knock-off, fronted by THIRD EYE BLIND. This is the soundtrack to the PG movie that kids buy tickets to just to sneak into the R rated jam. FIL (beartrapp.com)

### MERMAID SKELETONS • Darlings EP CD

Great guitar driven pop-folk from Richmond, Virginia full of darling talented multi-instrumentalists. Dig the backing keys. Honey like vocal harmonies dripping from the spoon melting into your sunrise cup of tea freshly dried from the garden. Listen to track four, "The Darlings." CB (Triple Stamp Records • PO Box 5753 • Richmond, VA 23320 • triplestamp.com)

### MESRINE/ PLF • split 7"

The needle drops and Canada's MESRINE starts. This is old school death metal sounding crust. It reminds me of DISRUPT or mid-era NAPALM DEATH complete with death grunts, growls and the infamous "arguing demons" characteristic of this style. At times, this is pretty damn fast. PLF sound almost exactly the same; crust influenced death metal. Sometimes it is hard to give these kinds of bands a fair review because they all sound exactly like the 5000 bands before them. Not bad, but nothing here stands out. KMK (To Live a Lie Records • 1306 Flint Place • Raleigh, NC 27605 • tolivealie.com)

### MIKE BELL • How To Avoid Your Past CS

Homespun indie-pop that seems to be a present-day incarnation of the excitable Elephant 6 Collective. Think pre-embarrassingly awful OF MONTREAL, the first few ELF POWER LPs, and BEULAH. Think about friends getting together around a four-track and seeing what happens. It's got all the kazooes, recorders, and air organs that you'd expect from something of this ilk. This Mike Bell character's got a very endearing elation to him, and his cassette makes me very much wish that modern indie were more like this and less like the OC-approved schlock that is probably playing in some dumb kid's college dorm somewhere RIGHT THIS VERY MOMENT. SP (Be Happy Records c/o Craig Woods • 4934 Cedar Ave • Philadelphia, PA 19143)

### MISCHIEF BREW • Boiling Breakfast Early TAPE

Erik Peterson's solo project/band MISCHIEF BREW has been rocking the acoustic crowd for something like ten years now, stylistically resting somewhere in the void between WORLD/INFERNO, LEFTOVER CRACK and GHOST MICE with his mix of gypsy and irish folk punk

influences. This is a re-release of his original demo tapes. It's lower-fi and less developed than his newer stuff but the core is there. The best part is that it comes with a fictional MISCHIEF BREW origin story about a sorcerer's apprentice who tries to brew an anarchy potion but instead brews mischief. Good stuff. GT (Dead Format • 2935 Fairview St. • Bethlehem, PA 18020)

### MISCHIEF BREW/JOE JACK TALCUM • split LP

One side sounds like a mix of old-timey drinking songs, sea shanties, and modern-hobo ditties with raspy, hokey vocals. The other side is the dude from THE DEAD MILKMEN sounding like a WEIRD AL version of BOB DYLAN or NEIL YOUNG. Each covers a DEAD MILKMEN song. FIL (Fistolo Records • PO Box 2836 • Upper Darby, PA 19082 • fistolo.com)

### MISCHIEF BREW • Jobs In Steeltown 7"

Two more songs that won't disappoint fans. Side B makes me think that if he just toned down the raspy/corny vocals and lyrical clichés, I might be able to take him seriously. Otherwise, to me, it sounds like music for five-year-olds at county fairs. FIL (Fistolo Records • PO Box 2836 • Upper Darby PA 19082 • fistolo.com)

### MOB 47 • Dom Ljuger Igen CD

Up until I got this CD I was unaware MOB 47 was still a band producing new music. Upon further review it appears this band has been active again since 2005 writing and playing shows in and around Sweden and Dom Ljuger Igen is some of the first new material put out by this band since breaking up over twenty years ago. This CD is a rager, picking up where the band left off two decades ago. Raw guitar riffs being played over fast drums with some d-beats thrown in for kicks. Two things that struck me about this recording are 1) its slightly slower than the old MOB 47 stuff I remember hearing and 2) the production value has obviously greatly improved from their earlier stuff. Both are to be expected 20 years later and I can happily live with both as long as MOB 47 keeps releasing music that doesn't disgrace their name like so many other bands who have broken up and gone on to reform. BN (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • profanexistence.com)

### THE MONACO HEART ATTACK • demo TAPE

The name of the game here is Malaysian ORCHID/Witching Hour worship. It's well-executed & nails the aesthetic, and maybe if this were ten years ago they'd be on a split with REVERSAL OF MAN. It's pretty awesome that music like this is coming out of southeast Asia at such a steady pace. SP (FAUZAN ABD AZIZ • No. 43, Jalan Semerbak 5 • Taman Bukit Dahlia • 81700 Pasir Gudang • Johore, Malaysia)

### MONIKERS • Wake Up CD

More dirty pop punk in the vein of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS or PINK RAZORS. It's catchy in the right ways, self-deprecating when necessary, and the vocals are gruff... somewhere in between Erik from DILLINGER 4 and early JAWBREAKER. "Wake Up" tells the vague story of empty and unfulfilling modern living, the violence of employment and nihilistic abandon, but always in present tense snippets of experience, as to prevent any discernible narrative. It's very post-modern, I like it. GT (Southern Lovin' • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL • 32604)

### THE MONOCLES • 7"

This is catchy, garage-y, rock n' roll that's carried by a good amount of attitude. I imagine they probably wear sunglasses when they play! It's pretty good. FIL (Jeof • 150 Whistler's Bend • The Woodlands, TX 77384)

### MONUMENT • A 3 Song 7"

This is high-energy, epic emo. For fans of BRAID, PIEBALD, PROMISE RING and the like. They do it well. They've got all the dynamics and those vocals that were chemically engineered to pull at your teenage heartstrings. FIL (Monument • 930 Wayne Ave. Apt. 605 • Silver Spring, MD 20910 • monumentisaband@gmail.com)

### MOSE GIGANTICUS • Commander! 7"

If ANDREW WK were a robot and teamed up with MILEMARKER

right when they decided to go off the deep end with all those keyboards, then maybe this would be the result. Except they don't seem to want to party as hard. Or set themselves on fire. I could be wrong on both those counts. Mine was numbered out of 61, so perhaps the world will never know. SP (Cottage Records • 816 Mosley St. • Tallahassee, FL 32310 • thecottagerecords.com)

### MOTHERSPEED/RETARD STRENGTH • split 7"

My brain is numb by how mediocre and boring this is. No printed lyrics, which is a bad sign, but the combination of that and the fact that one third of the songs on this record are covers, screams "we have nothing to offer but a tepid regurgitation of shit that you've already heard." Even RS's desperate attempts at shock value just come across as sad and contrived. FIL (133 Norwood St Apt A • Redlands, CA • 92373)

### THE MYSTERY BOOKS • Russia CDR

This seems to be a collection of personal reflections on life through mostly acoustic (or mellow electric) instrumentation. It's mostly singing/guitar strumming for the entirety of the cdr, with the occasional warm organ keys, and a see-sawing Upright Bass. I can tell that the singer spends time pondering life, yet the cautionary vagueness comes off as "selections from my journal, translated into song." A story IS being told... a story that can be told by anyone, almost, it seems. This is a CDR for the daydreaming "soft swayers of head" folks that would take BELLE & SEBASTIAN for a ride to a DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL show. JM (boom.doctor.doctor@gmail.com)

### NASTY INTENTIONS • Straight Outta Tompkins demo TAPE

Despite the cheesy and pixelated *Straight Outta Comp-ton* parody cover (Tompkins, as I understand, is some kind of punk house/compound), this is really good and catchy feel-bad pop punk with hella sweet jam-out parts and ruminations on shitty living situations and alienation from those one loves. Vocal arrangements have the tendency to be particularly heartwrenching. I wish it was recorded better because then I'd listen to it more. Joe wants you all to know that if you want one, send a dollar and an SAS envelope. He also says, in the song "Augima," that if this message should happen upon your door, you can write to him at 131 Tompkins ave, Brooklyn, New York. I guess he got a letter the other day, full of things he'd dreamt you'd say. JG (131 Tompkins ave • Brooklyn, NY 11206)

### THE NEW DUMB • Let's Get Lucky CDR

This self released CDR comes in a nice eco-friendly package that the band makes themselves. The only thing missing from the packaging was a lyric sheet so I'm not sure what this band is all about. They remind me of mid the 90s dischord bands that would play in Blooming-ton basements. I imagine the guitar player wears his guitar kinda high up and get's funky sometimes. Progressive rock might fit. There are some whoas. The guitar is crunchy. The bass is powerful and solid. CC (The New Dumb • 2A West St. • Somerville, MA 02144)

### THE NEW FLESH • Dog 7"

Dirgey, slow art-punk with disaffected blasé lyrics talk-shouted over mildly unsettling, repetitive music. PIL meets JESUS LIZARD, slowed down a bit? Maybe a damaged SHELLAC? Though it doesn't really go anywhere, this is perfect Baltimore music: fucked & depraved & nervous & filthy. SP (Terra Firma Records • 8316 Loch Raven Blvd. • Towson, MD 21286 • terrafirmarecords.com)

### NEW FOUND GLORY • Tip of the Iceberg 7"

Boring, unexciting, lifeless, formulaic and polished songs complete with a B side cover of "No Reason Why" by the Gorilla Biscuits. A song that would fit right in with the cringe worthy covers on Tony Hawk's American Wasteland soundtrack. MM (Bridge Nine Records • 119R Foster St. Bldg. 4, Suite 3 • Peabody, MA 01960 • bridge9.com)

### NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE • Claustrophobic 7"

Good God! This is totally raging, in your face, balls out hardcore. This screams 1988 complete with breakdowns, feedback, pickslides, and speed bass. The singer sounds completely desperate and furious and there are even occasional pissed off back-up chants. This never once



lets up and the recording is excellent. Lyrics are mostly about life, confusion or being pushed to one's limits. This is a total fist to the face and might be my best pick for this issues reviews. Get this immediately. KMK (Grave Mistake Records • PO Box 12482 • Richmond, VA 23241 • gravemistakerecords.com)

### 99 PROBLEMS • demo TAPE

Great demo. These six songs go by quickly with a pleasant, early-era FUCKED UP sound. Mostly it's the vocals which are also a little distorted, like they're recorded through a boombox. Honestly, this wouldn't hold up on any other format, but as a demo tape, it works and it's easy to listen to. FIL (99 Problems • Chateau • 2057 E 1st Ave • Vancouver, BC • Canada • V5N 1B6)

### NO BUNNY • Love Visions CD

The cover photo and title visually prepare you to expect some amalgamation of THE RAMONES and JAY REATARD through the lens of a weirdo in a fucked-up bunny mask. Well, that's a good start. Mix that up with a heavy dose of 60s garage pop and an ANDREW W.K. attitude. I wasn't surprised to see GRAVY TRAIN in the thanks list—I had first heard of NO BUNNY as being credited with writing the HUNX song "Good Kisser" which is stellar. I'm sure there must be other nerdier references that I'm missing because there are moments that seem so catchy-they-must-be-stolen, but the music is lo-fi, trashy bubble-gum pop for people who sing into their hairbrush while dancing around in their underwear. When they played a warehouse space here a few weeks ago, the beer never stopped flying and everyone was dancing their asses off. Not to be missed. FIL (1-2-3-4 Go! Records • 1234gorecords.com)

### NO GOAL • Vital 7"

NO GOAL play a mix of 80s and 90s inspired hardcore—angry, with youth-crew stylings, loads of breakdowns...pretty typical but actually done well! If you are stoked on that genre you will probably like this. Its good! The lyrics are better than most of that stuff though, well-written and interesting to read. There is also a sweet melodic breakdown at the end of the last song on side B. I can see some people being bummed on this...but I dig it...it's weird and out of place, and maybe a little cheesy, but that's why I like it. I don't think this band is together anymore though and this 7" was recorded in 2006, so I'm not totally sure what's going on with them, but if they are still around— I'm stoked! GAB (Third Party Records • thirdxparty.com)

### NORTON • CD

This Swiss band plays punk rock in a kind of REPLACEMENTS sense. They would do well at The Fest in Gainesville, and could probably bridge the gap between LEATHERFACE and a Chattanooga band like ADD/C. Something you could drink a beer and nod your head to. Apparently the drummer was in BGK and THE NITWITZ. FIL (Marcel Verhoeven • Röschiachstr 59 • CH-8037 Zurich • Switzerland • marcel@ddr.ch)

### NOW DENIAL • Facemelter CD

Interesting. This starts out with a really great stoner groove, but it fails to kick in with those heavy, sludgy guitars. Instead they go a totally different direction. This is more melodic and layered-in that Gravity records kind of way. At times they break into this rockin' style that I like to refer to as "cowpunk" because it has that rock n roll sleaze feeling to it like CLUTCH or NASHVILLE PUSSY or something (don't misunderstand, they don't sound like those bands). NOW DENIAL is hard to describe because there are a lot of different things happening here. Check them out for yourself if you dig stoned out, post hardcore stuff. KMK (Tor Johnson Records • PO Box 1556 • Providence, RI 02901 • torjohnsonrecords.com)

### OBSTRUCTION • 7"

This is some 80s DC influenced hardcore from Charlotte, NC. This 7" has five songs with lyrics about common punk themes such as consumerism, friend issues, and suburbia. The vocals have a pretty interesting edge to them and I'd be curious to hear what this band sounds like live. The somewhat metal double bass part in "nothing new" I could live without, but overall it's a pretty good 7". MM (Lunchbox Records • 1419A Central Ave. • Charlotte, NC 28205 • lunchboxrecords.com)

### OCTOBER DAGGER • CD

After track 7, this CD wouldn't work in my discman, so: My apologies for an incomplete review. This is blastbeat/screamo brutality from Singapore that would've been a lot more interesting to me were it not seemingly so torn between which direction to advance toward. Strangely, more success is had at the attempts toward screamo, at times invoking the holy spirit of ORCHID & PG99. This is most evident in the ORCHID cover song, "Lucky 13", which is done justice. SP (Muhammad Bamadhaj • Block 684A • Woodlands Drive 73 • #08-223 • Singapore 731684 • octoberdagger@gmail.com)

### OILTANKER • 7"

Really? Your band is called OILTANKER? I guess it's never been used before, so have at it boys. This is mid tempo, northwest coast sounding crust core by the way of Hartford, CT complete with east bay heavy drum and bass sounding parts that bludgeon along. This is yet another band that reminds me of TRAGEDY except this is more metallic sounding. They also toss in some DISRUPT or FROM ASHES RISE for good measure. Not bad, but obviously it's been done before. I have a feeling though that this band is tough as nails live and this record might not do them justice. I would love to see them if they ever come to Chicago. KMK (Spicy Soup Productions)

### ONLY THUNDER • Lower Bound CD

Another glossy emo/hardcore band that sounds like GRADE or something. All these bands slipping past our barcode defense has forced me to create a new review policy. From now on we will only accept review materials from the artists and labels themselves. Sorry PR companies, you'll have to send your shit to Alternative Press and college radios. There's this whole "economic crisis" and the death of print is looming, so I need this space for the DIY bands that are sustaining this community and not the careerists waiting for their big break. No offense, but if bands and labels don't care enough to send in their own records then how can we be expected to care enough to review it? FIL (beartrappr.com)

### OOH DA LALLY • American Nocturnes CD

Lo-fi, folk punk using a variety of instruments including, from what I can hear in this recording, an acoustic guitar, an accordion, a xylophone, a saw, and hand claps. The vocals and the lyrics make me think of that whole Bloomington/Plan-it-X scene but the music and delivery reminds me more of APHID ANT CONSTRUCTION. This CD sounds like folk-punk without the folk... but also not punk. This is the kind of thing that I would be very into a few years ago but now don't really have much of an ear for. Very simple DIY packaging with lyrics but not much more information than that. Not a bad CD by any stretch of the imagination and recommended for people into ROSA, KIMYA

DAWSON, and the aforementioned APHID ANT CONSTRUCTION. BN (xccc13@yahoo.com)

### OUTCLASSED • This Might Be Coincidence... LP

I'm glad that I let this one sit for a little while, because it didn't do much for me initially, but I've finally gotten over the overindulgent packaging\* and the one-sheet's dubious claims of their "dirty and disorderly math-rock-cum-hardcore glory" so I can finally hear the music for itself... and it's good. It's a nice blend of intense, mathy, screamo that is noisy in the right ways with under-layers of pained melody. Sounds like they're from Richmond. Definitely for fans of BRAINWORMS and MASS MOVEMENT OF THE MOTH with nods to STOP IT!!, ULTRA DOLPHINS, and a little of the rock of DRIVE LIKE JEHU. They do a great job of making a rollercoaster epic out of a short record, which I really appreciate. It makes me want to see them live. (\*The gatefold, one-sided, multi-colored-vinyl 12" with dye-cut pocket for a duplicate CD just seems like a bit much for fifteen minutes of music.) FIL (Forcefield Records • PO Box 26946 • Richmond, VA 23261)

### PARTY BY THE SLICE • 2008 TAPE

I would give this a very bad review, but I think this band would get off on it too much, so just go buy Razorcake #49 and read their review of this. That's like supporting the scene bro, err... DK (PBTS • 4144 South 1st Place • Milwaukee, WI 53207)

### PAZAHORA/KAH-ROE-SHI • Split 7"

This split 7" pairs up two heavy hardcore bands from Southeast Asia. The cover art is what you might expect from a crust EP depicting a skull ralphing dollar signs with human hearts suspended above it. Thankfully, this is where the clichés end. PAZAHORA from Singapore play melodic crust that draws influences from many different strains of hardcore. The obvious observation would be to say this band has some driving parts that sound a lot like TRAGEDY with some interesting guitar leads that bring to mind EKKAI and all the other emo-crust bands that are coming out of Spain today. The lyrical matter ranges from discrimination based on lifestyle choices to the challenges faced by migrant workers in Singapore. On the other side is KAH-ROE-SHI out of Malaysia. This band reminds me a whole lot of HIS HERO IS GONE with a little death metal thrown in for good measure. KAH-ROE-SHI blends interesting guitar work with brutal crust with some heavy breakdowns, which are the only respite from the onslaught. I'm a fan. BN (Diseased Wreckkids • 532 East 51st St. • Savannah, GA 31405 • diseased@diseasedrecords.com)

### PERTH EXPRESS • Harrow and Wealdstone CD

This CD is one of the last outputs from this now defunct German outfit. These guys sound like if HIS HERO IS GONE didn't break up, signed



PORTRAITS OF PAST

PHOTO BY DAVE SANDERS





to deathwish inc., hung out with CONVERGE, recorded a new record, and somehow it didn't suck. Absolutely crushing metallic hardcore from start to finish. Lyrics are written in English as well as in German but it doesn't even matter because I am too fixated on the music to worry about the lyrics. Some songs are so disgustingly heavy that I want to punch a hole in my wall while others are more fast paced and chaotic. Another CD with great production that sounds as good as it looks. Cool, fold out packaging with a hand drawn battle collage with horses and lions on one side and handwritten lyrics on the reverse. Definitely recommended. BN (Vendetta Records • Marchlewskistrasse 107 • 10243 Berlin • Germany)

#### P.K.P. • LP

This political punk band is from the city of Bergen in Norway. The band was started by Asgeir (bass) and Bjarte (vocals) in the fall of 2005 to stir up some action in the city they live in. This LP contains eleven songs of CRASS inspired punk with male/female trade off vocals. Although they have some moments of sing along parts on the A side where I feel like it almost sounds like old AGAINST ME which I find confusing. This LP comes with a HUGE booklet of lyrics and explanations in two languages and it is layered on top of some classic black and white punk style collages with protest pictures, anti corporation logos etc. MM (bjartemalum@hotmail.com)

#### PLANESMISTAKENFORSTARS • We Ride... CD

This is their "First Four Years." Fans of their later stuff might be surprised to learn how emo their first record was, but for me, nothing can touch the Knife In the Marathon twelve-inch. Those six songs, firmly anchored in the center of these 24 tracks, represent the band finding their raw, sweaty and unrelenting sound that would be imitated by others for years to come. And while the four BLACK FLAG covers are comparatively tame, their UNBROKEN cover completely buries the original. FIL (No Idea! • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL 32604-4636 • noidearecords.com)

#### PLAYING ENEMY • My Life As A Villain CD

This is Noisy metalcore that is in the style of TODAY IS THE DAY, DEADGUY, KISS IT GOODBYE, or maybe even BURN. PLAYING ENEMY features the mighty Andrew Gormley from RORSCHACH on drums. This is sonic, crushing, harsh, technical, and abusive. I tend not to like bands along these lines too much so when it comes to this style I am very selective, but this is really great. Sadly, they have broken up and this will be their final release. After hearing this though, I think I will track down their two full lengths. KMK (Hex Records • 201 Maple Ln • N. Syracuse, NY 13212)

**POLAR BEAR CLUB • Sometimes Things Just Disappear CD** This CD finds POLAR BEAR CLUB expanding on their gruff-yet-earnest brand of post-hardcore pop-punk. Think

SMALL BROWN BIKE, HOT WATER MUSIC, and a godless FURTHER SEEMS FOREVER. My first exposure to the band was their EP The Redder the Better, which set the bar pretty high for this band. The hooks and sing-alongs were packed tightly. With the full length, they seemed to pace themselves for this longer release, and while great parts are still there, they are fewer and farther between. The songs have slower tempos and the production seems a little too perfect. The album is pretty solid but they suffer from "the EP was better" syndrome. Its not as disappointing as the time I drove to New York to see this band only to find they didn't even have gigantic beards. Sometimes things just disappoint. MC (Red Leader Records • redleaderrecords.com)

#### POOSTEW • Misericordia 10"

Terrible name, but what do I know? This is a pretty cool looking 10" picture disk with one side being hand silk-screened by the artist and limited to 524. This is the first release from the label Midnight Manhunt Records. The lyric sheet is also pretty rad as it is printed on Vellum which bands don't do too often. The lyrics are set up as a concept divided into 5 parts about the destruction of the Earth by mankind. Sigh. Musically this is typical deathgrind with downtuned guitars, blast beats, grunts, squeals, and screaming. At times very technical, this band belongs on Relapse or some other metal label alongside bands like ORIGIN, PIG DESTROYER, or AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED. KMK (Midnight Manhunt Records c/o Rik Peeters • Duivelsbroek 5 • 2400 Mol • Belgium • midnightmanhunt.com)

#### PROLES! • Jump Up Party! demo Tape

Sloppy, posi, upbeat, lo-fi, sing-a-long punk with big hearts from Rockford, IL. It kinda sounds like a cross between SHOTWELL and THE HORRIBLE ODDS and from the pictures, they seem like the type of band that would be into playing a generator show anytime. It also says they love mail. FIL (\$4ppd from The Proles! • 1017 N. Prospect • Rockford, IL • 61107 • theproles@comcast.net)

#### THE PROSTHETICS • Count It! EP

Oompaloompa hardcore. This is mediocre in every way. The only thing even remotely interesting is the cover art, which is a heinous drawing of the sheriff from these young men's Arizona county getting "curb checked." There is a flimsy explanation for what the guy has done to merit this kind of end, but I still don't want to look at it or think about it, although I do wonder if anybody in this band seriously wears spurs. Anyway, you can order it, or you can check this thing out for free on the curb by my house next trash day. RQ (Organized Crime Records • PO Box 213 • Brookfield, IL 60513 • organizedcrimerecords.com)

#### THE PROSTHETICS • Lights Out 7"

I'm not too interested in reviewing a record by a band who would suggest in their lyrics that masturbation is the only thing keeping them

from raping someone. Maybe that makes me the embodiment of the "vegan hippie pacifist" that they sing about in a different song. If you're looking for an answer to how hardcore can be an alienating place for women, look no further than this 7". It's 2009. Grow the fuck up. SP

#### PROTESTANT • The Hate. The Hollow CD

Another absolutely brutal release from this Milwaukee band. From the first drum hit on track one until the brutal outro on 'Asleep' this band runs through nine tracks of hardcore influenced heavily by HIS HERO IS GONE. This band seems to do it all well, their songs are played at just the right pace to be driving and heavy while not dragging. This record also doesn't depend on leads to keep it interesting. Don't get me wrong, if you like all those Portland bands you will not be disappointed, but the leads are thought out and do not saturate the songs which I think is a lesson a lot of bands can learn. Also this band has some pretty epic buildups before breaking out into a full out assault of hardcore/crust controlled chaos. And there are even some mosh parts for kids to get down to. The production on this recording is also phenomenal and it sounds loud as hell. BN (Halo of Flies Records • 430 E. Lloyd St. • Milwaukee, WI 53212 • halooffliesrecs@hotmail.com)

#### PYGMY LUSH • Mount Hope CD

This is the "all quiet" record. There are no loud punk songs on this one. For fans of BLACK HEART PROCESSION, PINBACK and other moody stuff that's great for days when you're lying face down in your hole and don't want to get out. FIL (Lovitt Records • PO Box 100248 • Arlington, VA 22210 • lovitt.com)

#### PYGMY LUSH/TURBOSLUT • split LP

This, in my opinion, is the best from both bands. The loud PYGMY LUSH songs on here are their most BORN AGAINST-y. I mean, I get a kick out of it every time. You've already read enough about them in this issue, but if you haven't heard them, this is the best place to start. The real gem on this record, however, is the other side. The ever enigmatic TURBOSLUT—less a band than a force of nature—was the kind of group that, for me personally, defined the era in which they existed. (I regret that we never got to interview them, but you should be able to read a posthumous interview in the July issue of MRR.) Their music is crushing. I think that is the best way that I can describe it. Ugly, devastating, heavy sludge-grunge mixed with the raw brutal honesty and sharpened teeth of riot grrrl. This was recorded when they were at their peak, orchestrating a distinctly original and disgustingly beautiful wall of noise and pain. Somewhere under the wreckage is a glimmer of hope, but nothing this good could last. Don't get me wrong, there's a good chance that you won't like them, but then again, they probably wouldn't like you either. FIL (Exotic Fever • PO Box 297 • College Park, MD 20741 • exoticfever.com)

#### RAMMING SPEED • Brainwreck CD

Will somebody please stop the monstrosity that is the thrash metal revival? Look, in 1988 I had a leather biker jacket with THE ACCUSED painted on the sleeve (oh yeah, and a mullet). I was there and I know the fucking score. Similar to 1987 when there actually were good bands playing this style, 80% of them sucked. Stop this shit! RAMMING SPEED play completely generic thrash/speed metal with gruff sounding vocals. In their defense however, they do have a song called "Shane Embury is the Brad Pitt of Grindcore" and the lyrics are pretty genius. "Wasted no time playing slow, you live to grind." Shit, RAMMING SPEED aren't even that fast. Time to dust off my KREATOR records. KMK (Teenage Disco Bloodbath Records • 14 Elm St. • Brookline, MA 02445 • RammingSpeedBand@gmail.com)

#### RATIONAL ANIMALS • Perception Becomes Reality 7"

First let me say that I saw RATIONAL ANIMALS in a sweaty basement in Washington DC in the summer of 2007 and was completely and utterly blown away. RATIONAL ANIMALS are a group of young kids out of Rochester playing punk influenced heavily by late era BLACK FLAG. The first song begins with a cacophonous wall of noise that would sound right at home on the My War LP. This is the kind of music that is perfect for being locked in room, climbing the walls, and throwing your furniture out a window to escape. The lyrics further echo



these feelings, "Anxiety, can't sleep. Thinking too much. Sometimes, just thinking too much. Paranoia, what's after me? These murky shadows that can't be seen." Fucking manic as hell. I love it. BN (Feral Kid Records • 379 Ontario St. • Buffalo, NY 14208 • feralkidrecords.com)

### RED AND BLUE/TRAFFIC AND WEATHER • split LP

Dude, what the fuck's up with Michigan? What's with all of these great, brooding, dark-limned pop punk bands that are consistently kicking out the jams? There's THE GIBBONS, NORTH LINCOLN and now TRAFFIC AND WEATHER. Think the unrestrained catchiness of LATTERMAN or THE INSURGENT with a few more minor chords thrown in, and you're getting there. Recording's a little rough, but generally, their stuff is fucking fantastic—would love to hear more from these guys in the future. RED AND BLUE fare pretty well too—way more straight forward, resoundingly tight, catchy stuff, only drawback being the vocalist kind of has a FIFTEEN/ONION FLAVORED RINGS thing going on—the vocals are just a little too clean, almost bordering on goofy at times. As a whole, though, definitely a sweet split of an LP. KR (Los Diaper Records • losdiaperrecords@gmail.com)

### RELIGIOUS S.S. DISORDER • Demo tape #2

This reminds me so much of BURNING KITCHEN, both in the spastic kind of music that is also melodic in a weird way, and the monotone, almost spoken vocals. My favorite song is the second one, "Chemicals," as it has a sweet powerful breakdown, slow part in the beginning, where you could imagine the singer freaking out. This is good, but maybe slightly repetitive. I feel like I would be more excited to see this live. The lyrics are simply written but provocative, dealing a lot with mental health issues, "Christian punks" (I could not agree more with their statement about the complete hypocrisy of that), and shit-talking/gossip. They also cover a TRACY CHAPMAN song "Behind the wall," but I kind of wish it was done a little more outside their "formula." GAB (Punks before Profits • PO Box 1148 • Grand Rapids, MI 49501)

### RESIST • Resistography CD

Alright here's the deal. If you don't know who RESIST is at this point shave your dreadlocks, burn your assflap, and find a good home for your non-human companion (it's hungry and doesn't want to eat dumpstered bagels). This seminal anarcho-punk band existed from the late eighties to the mid nineties. Members went on to form bands such as DEFIANCE, DETESTATION and SEVERED HEAD OF STATE among others. This CD compiles the band's entire recorded output of about fifty songs including a live track from their reunion in 2008. RESIST play fast, raw anarcho-punk that pretty much all clock in less than two minutes. If you're still having problems, think AUS-ROTTEN or NAUSEA. Like any good discography the packaging includes some old flyers and has some live videos as well. If you've never heard RE-

SIST, buy this, the bands that are sewn to your vest owe this band big. BN (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • profaneexistence.com)

### THE RIOT BEFORE • Fists Buried in Pockets CD

You meet the singer of THE RIOT BEFORE at a cowboy bar, he's two pitchers' in, wearing his SOCIAL DISTORTION t-shirt and not long past introductions, he's already doing his best MIKE NESS. So he sings you the heartfelt tale of his fall from grace, how he's lost faith in god. You're getting drunk, starting to feel it, like "yeah man, life is meaningless!" And he's getting a little loose, starts talking politics, like, "...this bullshit war! Those damned politicians!" And you're like "yeah, fuck 'em," but it's a little embarrassing when he launches into the "woah oh" parts from that AGAINST ME! record, and he's probably blacked out by the time he confesses how many women he's had one night stands with...so you're like "buddy, I think you should leave..." GT (Southern Lovin' Records • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL • 32604)

### RIPSHIT/DYLAN BREDEAU • split 7"

The two Connecticut bands on this split sound nothing alike, and that's awesome. RIPSHIT play fast hardcore that at times is chaotic and heavy like DEATHREAT but can switch over to a more straight forward modern style that reminds me a bit of CUT THE SHIT. I like that the lyrics utilize imagery and a vernacular reminiscent of old hardcore but without having the addressed politics being rehashed of those days. Their side ends with a sick JUDGE style mosh part too. DYLAN BREDEAU plays some sort of upbeat driving emo punk, that sorta sounds like THE SOUTH. I really like the guitar playing, it's dissonant with angular chords that unlike much of this style doesn't rely on stop start progressions but instead have an airy feel almost making me want to cite some dream pop bands. The lyrics are a bit sappy, but it works. I like this a lot. DK (Spicy Soup Productions)

### ROGUE STATE • Emic Vs Etic LP

This is wasteland music. Noodling technical diy hardcore out of the vast smoggy expanses of southern California—Riverside if I recall correctly. Political as all get-out, using very effective samples & screaming themselves hoarse. The riffs borrow as much from DON CAB as they do metal, but this ain't no crossover shit, it's very firmly rooted in hardcore. SP (Be Happy Records c/o Craig Woods • 4934 Cedar Ave • Philadelphia, PA 19143)

### RUNNING FOR COVER • Dark Well LP

I'm not sure where the line is drawn between fastcore and powerviolence, but wherever the line is, I'm pretty sure RUNNING FOR COVER has destroyed it with this LP. Fast, heavy, relentless and yes, even a bit of melody. There are a lot of things that make this sound like your

typical powerviolence record. Riffs leading into crucial blasts with lots of heavy breakdowns to get your dance on. But the one thing that really struck me with this record is the bits of melody that shine through. Melodic bass and guitar interludes come out of nowhere and are a great contrast to other songs that are delivered at a blazing pace. Great, heavy, yet melodic bass lines run underneath this entire record and subtle guitar work catches your attention shortly before you are demolished by the wave of sound emanating from your speakers. The lyrics are every bit as pissed as you would expect but at the same time have a macabre, poetic nature to them. There isn't much information about this band in the insert but it says the record was recorded in 2005. Hopefully this band is still around, I'm sure they kill it live. BN (Art of the Underground • PO Box 250 • Buffalo, NY 14205 • artoftheunderground.com)

### SANCTIONS • Home Sweet Home CD

No, they do not cover a Motley Crue song and if you see this, get it immediately. After the first acoustical psychedelic opening track, this is upbeat to fast Tennessee, DEATHREAT, FROM ASHES RISE style dirt core with just the right amount of high end melody to keep it fresh and interesting. The packaging is a rad cardboard slip sleeve that appears to be hand silk screened. From frantic, noisy and droning, then pissed off as hell and gruff, these 12 tracks pound in by 20 minutes. I totally love this. Pick this up at all costs. KMK (MeatCubeLabel • 843A Battlefield Dr. • Nashville, TN • 37204)

### SCOLD • Fist Held High CDR

This is North Borneo Hardcore, as the CD states, all the way from Tuaran, Malaysia. This 4-song demo, with female vocals is pretty straightforward hardcore, reminding me of TANGLED LINES when they cover the GORILLA BISCUITS. Sped-up, trashy, lots of 'xthixx', 'xthaxx'; fast breakdowns, with feminist and straightedge lyrics. Apparently they used to do covers of STRAIGHT ANSWER. Anyone looking for international HC/SXE bands check this out. They are still around, and have other stuff recorded. GAB (Hidden Value Records • hiddenvalue@gmail.com)

### SCREAM HELLO • Everything Is Always... CD

I can only imagine that this is what bands like PANIC AT THE DISCO sound like. I don't know and I don't care—I just have to turn it off before somebody walks by and thinks I'm actually listening to this. FIL (beartrapp.com)

### SCUDWORTH • CDR

Energetic emo-rock. Whiny lyrics. FIL (scudworthpunx@gmail.com)

### SCUM OF THE EARTH • Bad Decisions LP

SCUM OF THE EARTH is a hip-hop outfit from Gainesville Florida. First off, I love their record label name. I'm sure a couple people have projects named that, but it's awesome. They have a kind of all-over aesthetic. The label art and stenciled jacket are really punk rock. The tracks veer between early electro tinged hip hop, a kind of 1987-94 languor in beats, and the jerky, rapid, off-kilter beats that came into hip hop after (maybe from UK dance genres like Jungle?) I like the energy and spirit in these tracks. The somewhat tinny vocal recording makes the lyrics a little challenging to hear on first pass, but the flows are energetic, if a little undeveloped. Nothing wrong with that, of course. When there are rhythmic variations, they come as pleasant surprises, but the less-varied parts of the songs aren't bad at all. I like the canny reference to KURTIS BLOW's 'The Breaks' also and much of the vocalization reminds me of the more conservative (musically) style of early rap records like those made by BLOW, the SUGAR HILL roster, BROTHER D and GENERAL COLLECTIVE, and TANYA WINLEY. These guys aren't at that level, but their energy and their comfort with different aspects of hip hop from different time periods is really promising, as is some sample-based evidence of a broader eclecticism. They sample THE CURE on a song called "The Cure," which is enjoyable and ballsy, though the vocals are derivative of dozens of other songs. I'm still kinda uncertain how I feel about the reference to holding his ex girlfriend's hand in an abortion clinic in one disco-y track though (the music doesn't really lead you to expect the topic), and points off for the term "white trash." Angry breakup songs often lead usually positive writers down pretty lame paths... HM (Destroy All Hipsters c/o Jamie Garvey • 18 NW 7th Terr. • Gainesville, FL 32601)



TROPHY WIFE

PHOTO BY FIL





### SEASICK • Ouroboros 12"

This is a one-sided LP with an etching of an Aztec looking snake eating itself. EEEHhh. To each his own I guess. This is pretty standard heavycore that sounds ugly, gruff, pissed off and of course, very metallic. I think I would have really enjoyed this back in the early 90s, but now I have grown tired of this sort of thing unless it is REALLY good and stands out. This really doesn't stand out to me, but I think a lot of people might really like this. It is a bit too moshcore for my taste. KMK (SoulRebel Records • 230 Skillmans Lane • Somerset, NJ 08873)

### SEITAN • D-Beat Hippie Lovers CD

Sloppy ultra-distorted d-beat/grind from Sweden with heavy guttural vocals and stereotypical peace punk packaging. Before the d-beat kicks in, there are a bunch of too long grind songs, which was confusing given the record title. Not a lot of variety here, but if crusty d-beat is your thing, it should do the trick. GT (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • profaneexistence.com)

### SENDER RECIEVER/THE MUZZLER • split 7"

The SENDER RECIEVER side starts out with what sounds like a thunderstorm/noise collage and then, wham! in comes four songs of seriously loud high screechy vocals and fast grindcore/powerviolence inspired chaos. The vocals are really loud which I find somewhat distracting. THE MUZZLER side is a little more straightforward with two tracks of technical metal inspired hardcore. This comes in a hand drawn black and white cover with all of the lyrics included. MM (Wolves Fight Good Records • 2697 Calaveras Lane • Muscatine, Iowa 52761)

### THE SERIOUS GENIUSES • You Can Steal The Riffs But You Cant Steal The Talent CD

This CD has its moments, but all in all this lacks the intensity and hooks that poppy indie punkish rock should have. At times it sounds very late 90s Midwest emo, and sometimes a bit more rock n roll. I cannot help but think that it sounds like LEGENDS OF RODEO. This seems like the type of band that I would really like and support if they like... lived in my house and I had to go see them cause they came to stuff I did. DK (kissdeathrecords.com • PO Box 75550 • Tampa, FL 33675)

### SEXY • Por Vida LP

Pre-FUTURE VIRGINS. This is a reissue of what is, in my opinion, a modern classic of recklessly sloppy-drunk, fiercely energetic pop-punk that culled influences from Recess and Lookout Records and then cranked them up and soaked them in the frantic energy and vulnerable honesty of drunken failures and social ineptitude. And it was only five years ago. I once saw this band only make it through a couple of their beautifully raw songs before two-thirds of the band had to awkwardly wrestle down their black-out-drunk, naked-from-the-waist-down bass

player from smashing all the microphones with his guitar. There was a slight air of concern, but mostly the sparse audience seemed to leave with smiles, echoing statements of "Yep, you never know what you'll get," kinda like that line from Pump Up The Volume. Classic, but whatever happened to the second LP? No good? FIL (Thrillhouse Records • PO Box 460207 • San Francisco, CA 94146 • thrillhouserecords.com)

### SHADES OF GREY / MASSMORD • CD

Honestly, I have nothing against CDs as some people do, but I really hate split CDs. They don't make any sense to me and I think that splits should be reserved for vinyl or a re-release CD version of something. That's just me I guess. Anyway, both of these bands are from Sweden and this is your typical crust core d-beat attack featuring 2 bands that sound a lot like TRAGEDY. They both have down tuned guitars and mid tempo songs very typical to the Profane Existence sound. If that's your thing, you will love this. This is a split release on 4 labels: PE, Vex, Contrazst, and Blindead. KMK (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • profaneexistence.com)

### SHITREIGN • CD

Nine songs of pretty crusty punk with male/female trade off vocals. The songs are pretty standard crust riffs with pounding drums behind them. The vocals are pretty loud and stand out a lot from the mix and I feel that if they were more equalized it would come across better. The black digipak is on really nice matte paper and it comes with a photocopied insert with lyrics and a collage that reminds me a lot of the art on the cover of the new DYSTOPIA LP. MM (Stu Morris • PO Box 342 • Peterborough, ON • K9J 6Z3 • Canada • shitreign@riseup.net)

### SHOREBIRDS • It's Gonna Get Ugly LP

Melodic posi-punk for fans of LATTERMAN and THE INSURGENT. They're not afraid to get a little emo in the vocals at times, but they balance it out with rough edges and manage to not sacrifice their integrity or perceived sincerity. It's good, but first you should get the *We Do What We Want* comp 7-inch and/or the SHOREBIRDS 7-inch, which are both on this label. FIL (Rumbletowne Records • PO Box 663 • Olympia, WA 98507 • rumbletowne.com)

### SHORES OF THE TUNDRA • Heart of the Reckoning 12"

This is a really rad looking one-sided picture disk with some kind of blood splatter looking design silk screened over clear vinyl so you can see through to the other side. There is no insert and really no information about the band save for a little blurb on the label in the center of the record. Usually I don't like it when there's no info or insert, but sometimes, in a case like this, the obscurity really adds to the music and makes it even more interesting. It begins with some lo-fi electronic

noise that drones on for quite a long while...wait...I just realized that this thing plays from the center outward. Hardy fucking har dudes, you got me. Christ am I too old for this shit? Pretty soon there will be clocks flashing 12:00 all around my apartment that I can't figure out how to reset. Anyhoo, musically this is pretty dynamic with lots of quiet, spacey droning that explodes into loud, chaotic, ferocity kind of similar to PELICAN, Souls-era NEUROSIS, GROUNDWORK, or maybe even EARTH. This is the kind of creepy shit that I like to listen to when I am driving a long distance late at night. Check into this release for sure if you can find it. KMK (Scenester Credentials • PO Box 1275 • Iowa City, IA 52244 • scenecred.com)

### SHOTWELL • Patriot LP

I'm no expert, but this must be one of the longest running (non-Grammy-winning) Bay Area punk bands ever. I would consider this to be definitive East Bay punk except that it's from the other side of the bridge, but regardless, this is a classic band that is still relevant and exciting. Both Aaron Cometbus and Iggy Scam have played drums for this band in the past, but not on this record. This contains some irresistible and infectious songs with a fervent socio-polical message. The cover was painted by one of my favorite artists, Sara Thustra, who also did a cover for ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT. FIL (Thrillhouse Records • PO Box 460207 • San Francisco, CA 94146 • thrillhouserecords.com)

### SHUT THE FUCK UP/THE RATS • split 7"

I mean, the label is called Thrashbastard. THE RATS are fun and would appeal to those who like their thrash with a little bit of tongue-in-cheek. They have a clear, tight recording that suits them well. SHUT THE FUCK UP are a little more frantic and sloppy and seem to take themselves a little more seriously, but not too much, considering all the amazing and ridiculous anthropomorphic, cartoony shit happening on the cover. All this from Germany. FIL (thrashbastard@yahoo.de)

### SICK/TIRED • Highlife demo TAPE

I have to admit that I looked this band up, and they appear to be part of that new ilk of record collector hxc/thrash, along with groups like HERDS, and CULT RITUAL. They also have an impressive "members of" list. All that aside, two things: 1. There is nothing new here. 2. Sometimes, things unbroken need not be fixed. This is a straight-ahead, brutal, fastcore thrash record. I could be wrong, but it struck me as somewhere between FEAR OF GOD, and HELLNATION. The guitar and bass are frantic but driven, the drums beaten to a pulp, and the vocals have that "I gargled with broken glass" growl (in a good way). They do manage to add a little dynamics to the record, sometimes hitting the blast beats, sometimes settling into a traditional thrash tempo, and a few times, even letting things churn a bit. In fact, there were two songs towards the end that stood out, one of which started to tread into SU19B territory, and the other seeming to have borrowed the vocalist from BATHTUBSHITTER. Not surprising, the recording itself is raw and "lo-fi". Worth your time. PS kudos on the closing sample. DEN (sicktiredthrash@hotmail.com)

### SINALOA • Oceans of Islands CD

With each full-length, SINALOA has improved in musicianship and songwriting without in the least bit losing the rough urgency that initially grabbed me on their demo and first LP. *Oceans of Islands* finds SINALOA bulking up their sound with more full chords & augmenting two songs with trumpet—of which, one of these songs, "What We Could Not Move" is my new favorite SINALOA number. This is everything you could expect it to be: impassioned, moving, intelligent, and brilliant from start to finish. SP (Level-Plane • level-plane.com)

### 16 • Bridges to Burn 12"

This might be one of the greatest "come back" records from a band that has been broken up for almost 10 years. Where do I begin? If you already know this band, and you should, then I will say this is just as devastating as *Zolof's Smile* and although it doesn't live up to *Drop Out*, it is 2009 and this band has changed and progressed. That being said this LP is still full of spite, hatred, despair, agony, paranoia, dystopia, piss and vinegar. Totally crushing and heavy, this album doesn't suffer from the overproduction that most of the bands that play this shit try to shovel at us. The cover art/ layout is totally phenomenal and was



created by Florian Bertmer. If you don't know his work, look him up immediately. Simply put, this is actually one of the best stoner/groove metal records that has been released in a long time and 16 have easily reclaimed the throne they once occupied in the early 90s. This will melt your Goldmann face off. Play loud as fuck. Down for 16, fucked for life. "I care less and less about my progress." KMK (Relapse • PO Box 2060 • Upper Darby, PA 19082)

### SLEEPWALL • 7"

Wasn't expecting much from the cover—pretty tepid grayscale shot of a field of weeds—but these guys surprised me. There's a shoegazing emo undercurrent running through this thing, but it's subtle; much more upfront is a muscular, on-their-game punk band with a heavy nod to the Midwest. Consistently tough as hell but coupled with a kind of restraint. Side A, "Sleepwalkers," takes the cake; solid songwriting, hoarse, half-sung vocals and some bright guitar leads peppered throughout. Think if PEGBOY had to take THE VAN PELT out on a date, and you're getting close. Nice record. KR (Toxic Pop Records • 2981 Falls Rd. • Baltimore MD 21211 • toxicpoprecords.com)

### SMARTBOMB • Chaos and Lawlessness 7"

SMARTBOMB play fast melodic punk in the style of STRIKE ANYWHERE, and GOOD RIDDANCE. The lyrics are social and political, and the recording sounds good. The artwork is by far the weirdest part of the record, as it doesn't suit the style at all—cartoon drawings of zombies? monsters? partying, getting wasted, driving cars in the desert. Really colorful and confusing. I think, maybe in a shallow way, that's one of the reasons I can't get into this record. The art is just so incredibly bad, I just don't get it. They have all the ingredients of a band this style, a dash of drama/epic-ness to the melody, sung/yelled vocals with a good voice, well-placed backing vocals, well-written lyrics...but I really wish they had done something different with the art. Well-done though—keep it up! GAB (Mightier Than Sword Records • 756 Myrtle Avenue #4-O • Brooklyn, NY 11206 • mtsrecords.com)

### SNAKE RUN • Lies 7"

It seems like a lot of people are putting good records in shitty covers these days. This one looks like it would make more sense wrapped around a scented candle. I guess they were going for that kind of CANCER KIDS look. But all that aside, this band from Adelaide, Australia, plays fast, trebly thrash, with a little bit of a Japanese influence. I can hear a little GAUZE and even a little GISM in there. One of their songs has a sweet, rock n roll breakdown ending with killer guitar solos. FIL (wertyy1@hotmail.com)

### SNOWSTORM • 7"

For fans of CROM TECH, LIGHTNING BOLT, and feedback. This

Philadelphia two-piece is less technical and mathy; more noisy, punked-out, and thrashy. The short songs make it work. Twelve songs in seven minutes. FIL (Malleable Records • 3321 Spring Garden Street • Philadelphia, PA 19104 • malleablerecs.com)

### SOFT SHOULDER • Hit Single 7"

I've never imagined a jack-in-the-box being used to tunelessly bridge (in this case, soloing as an acoustic VEROTONEN) between bursts of boom-boom, sis-sis. This record has a couple of different ideas, that work together well. Whether it's from a slightly metallic-sounding oscillation of pitch (noisy interlude) or making accidental dance music for the disaffected, the system works! Reminds me a bit of BLACK CAT 13, good, good. JM (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

### SOMETHING'S WRONG/SHOREBIRDS • Split 7"

I got this in the mail on the same day that I saw SOMETHING'S WRONG play a house show in Oakland. They were great. Live, this band is exactly what I love about seeing at house shows: tight, but rough around the edges; flailing but keeping it together; punk as hell with male and female vocals sharing the mic. You, know, the good shit. Their song brings THE GITS and CRIMPSHIRE to mind. I don't even mind that the male vocals fall a little flat when placed alongside the female vocals. Good work. I've been hearing a lot of good things about SHOREBIRDS for most of this year. I've heard that they're a great live band, but I also heard that they already broke up, so I only have this one song to make up my mind. It starts off slow and somber and builds up into a light mid-tempo rocker with half-sung, half-shouted vocals until it speeds up into a cacophonous mess (I mean that in a good way). Also, this band features ex-members of LATTERMEN and JAWBREAKER and it sounds like it. GH (Rumbletowne Records • P.O. Box 663 • Olympia, WA 98507 • rumbletowne.com)

### SPELUNKER • CDR

These four songs are endearing in same way that one might look at a scrawny, mangy, lost puppy out in the freezing rain. Thin and jangly sounds of desperation and discordant melody that wouldn't be accurately described as emo or screamo, but somewhere in between with bands like SINALOA. It sounds good. FIL (spelunkermail@web.de)

### SPIRES • Flowers and Fireworks CDR

Fans of ENVY should check this out. Spacey, echo-y guitars building up with similar epic dynamics, driving rhythms, and throaty screams before breaking down again and meandering a little in between bursts of pained screams and metallic hardcore parts in the vein of BOTCH or CONVERGE, but with more of a screamo aesthetic. I'm guessing there may be ex-members of COMADRE judging from a trademark chant-a-long breakdown and it being recorded at Atomic Garden. Otherwise,

there might have been a few awkward moments in the studio. It takes a lot to win me over with this style of music, but this is good. FIL (Jason Romero Dude • 2523 MLK Jr Way • Oakland, CA • 94612)

### STARLA! UBIQUITOUS • CDR

Punk politics 101 or acoustic songs that teenage runaway hippy-punks play to each other while they're waiting to hop trains to the next anarchist gathering. Sounds like folk played by a punk who only listens to folk played by other punks. We care about the same things and I don't want to sound too jaded, but I just wish that songs of hope and change didn't sound so passive and apathetic. Listen to OTIS REDDING's version of "Change Gonna Come." Holy shit. There's a whole world out there. FIL (Sharpie Fumes Collective • PO Box 513 • Thessalon, ON • P0R 1L0 • Canada)

### THE STATE LOTTERY • Cities We're Not From LP

This sounds kinda like a cross between LEATHERFACE and LUCERO with some mellow DRUNKEN BOAT/BENT OUTTA SHAPE moments. The recording is good and the songs aren't bad, but personally, I think a better choice for a titular track might have been number seven. I would call this punk bar rock. FIL (Salinas Records • PO Box 20996 • Ferndale, MI 48220)

### STATE OF THE UNION • To The Bitter End...CD

This is the discography compiling most of their material covering their existence from 1992-2001. I always assumed these guys were total d-beat crust because they were on Profane Existence. Actually it sounds like they were more influenced by bands similar to NEUROSIS, AMEBIX, or DYSTOPIA, but not nearly as heavy or creative. There is a lot of musicianship going on here, but the production doesn't capture the heaviness or fury that I think they were trying to achieve. This is sometimes sludgy and sometimes mid-tempo, technical and loud. If you are already a fan then this is a nice collection. KMK (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • profaneexistence.com)

### STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE • Change the Mood 7"

Whoa, I was just shy of 100 percent certain that this was going to be a Japanese youth crew revival record. This is distorted as fuck; not necessarily Burning Spirits or CONFUSE/GLOOM distorted, though there are certainly elements of the Nuclear Addicts 7" going on here. This is a fine example of "noise not music" hardcore, and though I don't think noise as fucked as this could ever be "pleasant," this was certainly a pleasant surprise. SP (Answer Records • recordshopanswer.com)

### STUPID ROUTINES • TAPE

Hell, this tape is pretty fucking good! Female-fronted, mid-tempo, guitar driven punk that reminds me a little of REDMOND SHOOTING STARS or BLONDE AMBITION. It's raw and catchy and I bet they are a great live band. The recording is a little rough but I feel like it helps the band overall. The tape has 6 songs plus lyrics. Get it! GH (Feral Kid Records • 379 Ontario St. • Buffalo, NY 14208 • feralkidrecords.com)

### SURRENDER • live at 924 Gilman St. TAPE

I recently heard an early live recording of a local BAD BRAINS show that—at least on that listening—I liked better than any of their studio records. I feel the same way about this tape. The sound quality is great, but what really comes across is how well they have their shit together and obviously think about every aspect of a live show as a focused and cohesive presentation. Something to think about. FIL (\$5ppd • Five Ten Tapes • PO Box 22083 • Oakland, CA 94623 • lastwhiteflag.org)

### SURRENDER • Paper Thrones LP

This is a rollercoaster of an album that reminds me of the ups and downs of the first two CHUMBAWAMBA LPs, but way punked-out. And just like those LPs, if you're not following the lyrics, you won't be able to tell when one song ends and another begins. Fortunately you are going to want to read the lyrics. Rather than spouting a lot of rhetoric, they ask poignant questions that challenge you to think for yourself. This is a band to watch out for. FIL (Thrillhouse Records • PO Box 460207 • San Francisco, CA 94146 • thrillhouserecords.com)



FAILURES

Photo By Fil





### SYPHILITIC VAGINAS • Syphilitic Vaginas 12"

If this LP has ever been reviewed in this zine, then I missed it and I apologize, but this is 100% my favorite release of 2008 (so far) and I doubt anything else will out do it. There are lots of rumors floating around about this band, the main one being that they are not actually from Japan and that it is really just a one man project from Germany. I try not to concern myself with rumors about this and that so I will get right to the music. This completely shreds anything I have heard this year. It is a total Japanese punk influenced metal masterpiece that rages and shreds leaving nothing but total destruction and annihilation in its path. The most obvious comparison here would be to say they sound like GISM and this is true, but I would go step further and say they sound like SoniCrime era GISM. Their name ripped from a GISM song should clue you in as well. There are also traces of GAUZE, VENOM, early BATHORY and Show No Mercy' era SLAYER. This is a relentless cult ritual of mayhem that will completely lay waste to you the second the needle drops. There are 8 songs here and they go by fairly quick, but it seems that this LP is the perfect length. I can not say enough about the ferocity and savagery contained on this record. Of course the layout consists of Satanic and Occult imagery. No insert and song titles in Japanese make this all the more mysterious. Originally pressed as 135, then repressed as 500, a 3rd pressing of 500 more on Hardcore Holocaust allowed for more people to get their hands on this gem. By the time this review comes out this will be long sold out, but fear not for a CD discography on Rescued From Life Records is in the works. KMK (Hardcore Holocaust - hcholoocaust.com)

### TANGLEFOOT/ILL-EGO • split 7"

One song each from Timothy Remis and Al Burian. TANGLEFOOT does a sappy banjo number that's easy on the ears and starts off a little old-timey. The ILL-EGO song is what I would call acoustic grunge. Like I could totally see this as a deleted scene from *Singles*. Say they're at Jimi Hendrix's grave or something and then the camera pans over to Chris Cornell playing this bluesy number to himself. It's charming and it grows on you. Comes in a pretty, three-color, screen-printed cover. FIL (I Love Drugs)

### THE TANKS • Keep Breaking Down CD

This record is an interesting combination of styles. On the one hand, you have an instrumentation with the sound quality of groups like BIG BUSINESS, HIGH ON FIRE, and WEEDEATER, with that combination of driving drums, constant cymbal crashes, and a drop D fuzzed out bass. There are no southern riffs or doomtrills here however, just a heavy mid-tempo rock sound. In the meantime, the vocals are clean and straight ahead (except for chorus fx), with a bit of a throwback to 90s post-punk. They reminded me, in a way, of Al Burian, in MILE-

MARKER, when he wasn't screaming (a la the *Ominosity* album). The songs vary in tempo and style from time to time, and are peppered with effects, to keep things fresh. The sound is tight with high production values. The packaging is well put together, hand screened cardboard. As for the lyrics (which are emphatically spoken) they seem to be personal reflections on social problems. All in all, a well thought out and executed release. DEN (Scenester Credentials • PO Box 1275 • Iowa City, IA 52244 • scenecred.com)

### TARPIT • There Is Nothing After Extinction CD

If you see this for sale avoid it at all costs. This is what I like to refer to as "small amp metal" because it is trying to be excruciatingly heavy, but it has absolutely no balls or power. The drummer is horrible, which as we all know, drums are a key element to any death metal band. In fact, this is some of the worst dirge style death metal that I have heard in a long time. Song titles are named after dinosaurs (like velociraptor) and the cover art features said dinosaurs struggling to get out of a tarpit. One might then ask themselves, if as TARPIT's album is titled, "there is nothing after extinction" wouldn't a tarpit full of 1/2 preserved dinosaur bones prove that there is in fact SOMETHING after extinction? I guess this is kind of like GOATLORD from Las Vegas. There is much dino growling and screaming and according to the insert "extra growls" were performed by Clint on tracks two and eight. I have already wasted way too much time on this. KMK (J Bahman • 3350 Keswick Rd. • Baltimore, MD 21211 • bachmanjohn@hotmail.com)

### TENT/CITY • Drought LP

This is one twenty-minute-long track of live, minimal, free-form something or other. I don't know what instruments were used, mostly things that clang and howl, but it starts off sparse, sounding like an old typewriter and then building into a deep sea atmosphere of lonely whale sounds echoing through the abyss before it fades away again. Recorded live in Phoenix during a record drought. One-sided, clear, and screen printed. FIL (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

### TENT/CITY • Stinkweeds CDR

Interesting concept here. The CDR is housed behind a patch of moldy carpet. The story is that it comes from the stage at this record store in Arizona called Stinkweeds. The carpet has been trampled by many a bands, and has all the after-effect of it. When it comes to free noise, ambient, and/or "clanking on clanking," this has it in spades. Each track has the feel of being an excerpt from an improvised performance (note: these recordings were culled from mostly late night dirges in said record store.) It reminds me of MOE! STANIANO, but with less abrasiveness. The twelfth track is the best track, with it's moderate/controlled delivery with rhythmic howling. Desolate...appreciative in its

concept. If you're into collective free-noise, pick it up. JM (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

### THIRD DEATH/ALL THOSE OPPOSED/HULK OUT • 3-way split 12"

This LP is a 3 way split with all the bands on one side and an etching of skulls and bones on the other side. I believe all three bands are from Rhode Island as well. First up is THIRD DEATH with 10 tracks of fast-core that remind me of CHARLES BRONSON because of the snotty-assed vocals and blistering tempo without being grindcore. Thank you and fuck yeah! Next up are 2 songs by ALL THOSE OPPOSED. They slow things down a bit with mid tempo D-beat, driving rhythms. There are also some cool REAGAN YOUTH style guitar leads over top of all the madness. They end off with a sample of what sounds like Slash from G n'R thanking the loyal fans. How did these guys know I have an obsession with live metal talking? So far so good... Band three is called HULK OUT. I really want to know more about these guys. In the live pictures in the insert, the singer is wearing this crazy looking muscle suit and he has a giganticly massive Hulk fist that he is wearing/ holding the mic with. Insanity! Musically HULK OUT is pretty fucking rad. They have a heavy as fuck bass tone and the first of their six songs has mostly mid paced buzzsaw guitars that make me want to headbang or bash some poseurs. The rest of their songs have that fast INFEST style drumming and guitar work that lead into some really great breakdowns. I can't help but think ASSHOLEPARADE. The song titles are sarcastic and goofy like ANAL CUNT or CHARLES BRONSON. One such example being "The Rhode Island Smoking Ban is an Epic Piece of Legislation." I really wish they had included the lyrics. In fact that is really the only weak point to this release—the insert. I wish it had more information about the bands, etc. etc. Great release. KMK (Tor Johnson Records • PO Box 1556 • Providence, RI 02901 • torjohnsonrecords.com)

### THIS IS IT • demo Tape

Sounds like a punk stuck in their bedroom on a rainy day, desperately fighting boredom with their 4-track. As sloppy as ABE FROMAN or THE CARS THE DOORS, but stripped down, minimal, and experimental. FIL (Unfortunately, I don't know where this came from.)

### TIMBER • CDR

Pleasant surprise—a five-song demo from a band that strikes me as loaded with potential but still trying to get a grasp on precisely what angle it is they want to attack from. As it's a demo, the overpowering quality of the snare drum tends to demolish a lot of the other intricacies involved, but I'm hearing everything from a steroid-laden GIANT HAYSTACKS to a less-somber LIFE AT THESE SPEEDS. I predict quality from these gentlemen in the future. KR (MattKennyErik@gmail.com)

### THE TIM VERSION • Decline Of The Southern Gentleman CD

Gotta say—and this is by someone who owns two of their other records—I think they've fully hit their stride with Decline... Odd to say that about a band that's been around for what? Well over ten years? But this album seems totally encapsulated. It comes across as an entirely complete, self-contained object, while I felt like they tended to wander or lose steam on other outings. It's rough-hewn, whiskey-soaked punk that's got more than a nodding acquaintance with bands like DAN PADILLA and TILTWHEEL, though THE TIM VERSION's also got more of a straightforward country flair than either of those bands. It's consistently smart and heartfelt: soaring at times and wonderfully down in the Old-Crow-and-barbiturates dumps at others. Bonus points go to the band for what is probably the best grouping of lyrics I've read in some time—brilliant songs like "Shin Splints," "Murder" and "Paradise By The Fluorescent Lights" encapsulate topics like work, alcoholism, the deepening divide between rich and poor, the at-times-seeming futility of life, etc. KR (No Idea! • PO Box 14636 • Gainesville, FL 32604-4636)

### TITANARUM • Spastis progressivus aggressorium 7"

This totally kicked the hell out of me from the needle drop. It is furious, progressive, fast, dirty and metallic style hardcore from San Diego. You can totally hear the dirty NYC elements of bands like VILLAINS



or RORSCHACH. There is even a Daryl Kahan type urgency to the vocals to match elements of INTEGRITY moshcore riffs and even some technical guitar work that reminds me of BL'AST. All six songs on this EP are rad and there is even a CD-R included with the 7 inch which I thought was a cool idea (since I have no turntable in my car). Brilliant lyrics, check this shit: "I'm aging quickly and yet I still thrash, I'm aging quickly and I still play hyper fast" WHHOoooo!!! Get this record! KMK (Titanarum • 4118 Florida St. • San Diego, CA • 92104 • titanarum.net)

### TITLE FIGHT • Kingston 7"

"OH NO!" I thought at first. "Could this be Bridge 9 worship?" Well... remember when LIFETIME made the transition from hardcore to melodic punk? That transition is by & large what this is like. Think KID DYNAMITE style melodic hardcore. If this were 1998 & I were still 16, I'd be at all of this band's shows. SP (Flightplan Records • 12 Harbor Rd. • Levittown, PA 18056 • flightplan.bigcartel.com)

### TOTALICKERS/HOLOCAUST IN YOUR HEAD • split 7"

Two ragers from Spain. A little d-beat, a little thrash, a little crust, and a little distort, but done well and with enough stylistic flourishes to set them both ahead of the pack. The cover art of the skull-pope with a machine gun, is pretty sweet, too. FIL (kremorecords.cjb.net)

### TO WHAT END? /WITCH HUNT • split EP

When I picked up this split I randomly put it on my turntable and by the luck of the draw TO WHAT END? came up first. This Swedish band delivers three songs of melodic crust that sound like a mixture of REMAINS OF THE DAY, later HARUM SCARUM, BURNING KITCHEN, and a healthy twinge of metal. Fucking solid. On the other side of this EP, WITCH HUNT appear to be tired of people comparing them to TRAGEDY, FROM ASHES RISE, and all the other neo-crust bands playing the 'Portland sound.' The first track opens with a mid tempo intro that soon erupts into an explosion of thrashy punk rock. The second song is more what I have come to expect from WITCH HUNT, a bit slower, more melodic, and drawing influences from a lot of the early UK peace punk. The last song is a cover by the almighty RUDIMENTARY PENI that absolutely fucking destroys. BN (Witch Hunt • PO Box 30923 • Philadelphia, PA 19104)

### TOWERS • TAPE

Downtuned and pissed, sometimes chaotic, I'm sure these guys are absolutely sick of hearing people compare them to DEADGUY. There is, of course, more to it than that: Think DEADGUY, but informed & aware of early-2000s Level Plane & mid-2000s Louisville. Thumbs up. SP (Protagonist • PO Box 64574 • Tucson, AZ 85728)

### TOWERS • Full Circle LP

Jesus fucking christ. You know, I got home from a rainy day of riding around and delivering things I don't care about to people I don't care about, and I thought that—rain-soaked and salty—this would be a good time to listen to this record. Lighten the mood it did not—in all it's ambiance and beauty, this record really is an extremely pointed little pill to swallow. As in, it doesn't allow you to forget that it's there, working its way through you with a trail of blood behind it. In between the oppressive, downtuned frenzy, you're treated to instrumental parts that sit on the fence dividing unsettling & calming. Should I call this post-screamo? Should I call it literate mathmosh? Nah, I'll opt to call it neither, and compare them to no one. This is truly in a league of its own. SP (Init Records • P.O. Box 871 • Sioux Falls, SD 57101)

### TRANSIENT • 7"

I think that these ladies & gentlemen would be thrilled to be compared to DYSTOPIA. I'll bite. The bass strings are so fucking downtuned that you can all but hear them slapping the pickguard, which of course makes for a very muddy, very depressive affair. Punishing; I'm glad to have had the chance to hear this. SP (Adam Wilson c/o Transient • 2820 SE Ash • Portland, OR 97214 • bikesinsteadofcars@yahoo.com)

### TROPHY WIFE • demo TAPE

These three songs are the first recordings of this local two-piece (guitar

and drums.) They have a distinct sound that's difficult to categorize. Like nerdy math-rockers playing warm, melodic, stoner jams, accented with minimal, raw and unpretentious female vocals that are mostly screamed with the crescendo. I prefer to watch them in a small crowded space where they don't really need to use the microphones. FIL (Exotic Fever Records • PO Box 297 • College Park, MD 20941 • trophywifeband@gmail.com)

### TRYSTERO • A Scrapyard of Fallen Empires 12"

A five song EP of instrumentals by a band who adds cello to the traditional rock Drums-Bass-Guitar lineup. It could loosely be described as post-rock but I feel like that term lumps TRYSTERO in with a heap of bands who seemed really exciting in the 90s whose records made more sense then than now. OK, I'm not big into metal or stoner rock, but these guys blend them nearly seamlessly with the other elements (the cello in particular brings in both a classical element but also some folk vibe as well as a resemblance to some of the more rambling songs on RIP RIG & PANIC's "I Am Cold"). It all works really nicely. These songs have clearly been put together with a great deal of thought and with a sense of adventure. This record definitely clears the "this would make great soundtrack music" hurdle that some instrumental music has trouble with. HM (Feral Kid Records • 379 Ontario St. • Buffalo, NY 14208 • feralkidrecords.com)

### TURNCOAT • TAPE

Great release from Long Island dudes. Power-violence with a heavy dose of groovy stoner riffs full of veins of NO COMMENT. Comes with a teeny little flyer offering a free mp3 download of this. Times are totally a-changing. JG (Just a Audial • 2759 Crescent St • Second Floor • Astoria, NY • 11102)

### UGLY LAW • 7"

This is pretty crazy and retro sounding and I can't decide if I love it or loathe it. It is pretty straightforward, mid tempo hardcore with a definite noise element to the music. In a way, this reminds me of one of those obscure bands that would have been released by Nemesis or Workshed back in say, 1990 and then vanished into thin air. It's worth a listen. KMK (\$5ppd • Atavistic Records c/o Bobby Hufnell • 1725 Avondale Ave. • Richmond, VA 23227)

### UNWELCOME GUESTS • The Painter 7"

So, I guess they're remaking *Empire Records*. Renée Zellweger will reprise her role, but this time—when it's time to save the record store and she sings "Sugar High" on the rooftop—she'll be backed by this band, not Coyote Shivers. This kind of sounds like a cross between what I imagine the later REPLACEMENTS records and later JAWBREAKER records sound like. FIL (Feral Kid Records • 379 Ontario St. • Buffalo, NY 14208 • feralkidrecords.com)

### THE UNWELCOME GUESTS/ORPHAN CHOIR • split 7"

These bands fit well together. UNWELCOME GUESTS have a folksy/alt-country/punk sound. They do two songs. One about inspiration and one about getting drunk. There is a familiar sound that makes you want to sing along but the songs linger a bit at the end with solos and repeat choruses. The ORPHAN CHOIR are Canadian and only do one song here. It opens with harmonica and then the gruff/screamy/indy vocals kick in and they remind me slightly of the AFGHAN WIGS, which is a good thing. There's a southern rock sounding breakdown just when you think you know where they are heading. Not bad. CC (Salinas Records • PO Box 20996 • Ferndale, MI 48220)

### USED KIDS • 7"

Supergroup alert: These USED KIDS are Nato & Danny from MODERN MACHINES, Kate from CHEEKY, and Mike from THE ERGS. Picking up where MODERN MACHINES left off, we've got one song—or, I should say, one fucking anthem—by Nato, one by Danny, and a cover sung by Mike. All the HUSKER DU-isms that you'd expect from Nato & Danny are here, done up perhaps a little more concise & to the point than MM. It's a shame that none of Kate's songs are on this debut EP... I suppose at least it's something to look forward to, because they are always the highlight of their sets. SP (Salinas Records • PO Box 20996 • Ferndale, MI 48220)

### USELESS CHILDREN • 6 Song CDEP

All bullshit trite sayings aside, never judge a book by its cover. Locked inside this professionally printed digipack is perhaps one of the most refreshing bands I've heard in a very long time. The imagery is bleak, with the usual black and white motif and a child with a slit wrist on the back cover, but this is where the clichés end. USELESS CHILDREN are a three piece from Victoria, Australia who flawlessly blend thrashy hardcore, riot grrl, and straight ahead punk. The first track hits hard with a simple, yet raging solo and then its off to the races from there. Other songs start slower with a bit of a groove that left me tapping my foot and pumping my fist before being thrown into a whirlwind of chaos. The vocals screamed at a mile a minute over melodic riffs, the CD does not come with lyrics and I would love to know what these songs are about. Fist pumping, circle pit inducing hardcore punk. The way it should be. BN (Exo Records • PO Box 1365 • Collingwood, Victoria • Australia 3066 • exorecords.net)

### UV RAYS • Are Sick of Humans 7"

Five tracks of rock and roll inspired punk songs from upstate New York. At times they remind me a little of bands like the DEAD BOYS and a little bit like the UNSEEN. There are some pretty good riffs in there but overall I was not thoroughly impressed. I think the song "smash"



SEX VID

PHOTO BY FIL





on side B is the most successful and I like the vocal delivery on it: The cover is screened and provides full lyrics and info. MM (Feral Kid Records • 379 Ontario St. • Buffalo, NY 14208 • feralkidrecords.com)

#### VIOLENT ARREST • Criminal Record 7"x2

Best record(s) I reviewed for this issue. Fast, short, tight, and raging hardcore from England. This is their third release. Really cool design, although the unlabeled and incomplete lyrics are a little annoying. Regardless, shit rules. Hard. Listen to it. JG (Grave Mistake Records • PO Box 12482 • Richmond, VA 23241 • gravemistakerecords.com)

#### WALRORA • TAPE

Awesome punk-black-metal. Sounds like URANUS with a little bit of MEMENTO MORI. Four epic songs of hauntingly melodic rage with thick distorted bass, demonic female vocals, and a warm, soothing production. But it probably wasn't until I read the lyrics to "Punk Rock Can't Save Our Lives" that I really fell in love with this. Holy shit. FIL (Walrora • 39 Illawarra Rd. • Marrickville • NSW 2204 • Australia • walrora@gmail.com)

#### WERFUKT • Thrash Academy 4 (Thrashers on Patrol) CD

The cover of this depicts a group of hand drawn skeletons standing in front of a mushroom cloud. The skeletons are holding machine guns, but for some reason one of them is playing guitar and their "leader" if you will, is flipping the bird. I'm not sure who came up with this concept, but my real concern is that they thought it "looked cool" and agreed it was going to be the cover of their album. OK, now go back to the beginning of this review and re-read it. If you make it to this point again then you might enjoy WERFUKT after all. In a nutshell, WERFUKT play a combination of 80s thrash metal mixed with a bit of DISCHARGE. The intro to the CD has the Police Academy theme song, hence the title of the album. The back cover has yet another skeleton, but this one is dressed as a police officer and he is smoking a cigar and drinking a beer. In their defense, it is good to see a band doing exactly what they want and not giving a fuck about what anyone else might think. 18:38 more minutes of my life. gone. KMK (Jeff Van Vomit • 3313 Jahon Ct. • Rosamond, CA 93560)

#### WHAT PRICE, WONDERLAND?/SYN\*ERROR • split 7"

In the lovely note that came with this record, WPW? was described as "twinkle emo" these are exactly the kind of descriptors that I was just lamenting in the GSLG/MAG review that I just wrote. I'm not exactly sure what that means, but it makes sense. This is a pretty record, obviously put together with a lot of care. Just as the note writer

suggested, this record is recommended for fans of BOB TILTON, VAN PELT, and even POLICY OF 3, but on the prettier, self-reflective side of things. FIL (Thank You Records • Kelton Gardens • Glencaple Road • Dumfries • DG14TZ • Scotland • UK)

#### WHO CALLS SO LOUD • 12"

Epic screamo with a capital E-M-O. Each side feels like a single epic song with extended quiet intros and outros. The first intro is surprisingly electronic, video game-y, and FAINT-like, but when the loud part comes in it reminds me that there's a member of PORTRAITS OF PAST in there. I especially like the loud stuff on the second side because it sounds like each member has a different idea of the tempo and are unwilling to compromise. Subtleties like that tension and struggle, whether real or perceived, are what make this band stand out amongst the mediocre. FIL (Protagonist • PO Box 64574 • Tucson, AZ 85728)

#### WINNING LOOKS • 7"

Four killer jams by this garagey two-piece featuring Tami Hart on guitar. The songs are simple, catchy and totally rockin. "What a Shame" and "2,3,4" have an early GOSSIP feel with similarly irresistible dance-groove riffs, while "Gone" has a high-energy manic-sassiness that's more akin to MIKA MIKO. If you need any more of an endorsement, it was recorded by Kathleen Hanna and put out by the bassist of LIMPWRIST. FIL (Waiting Records • waitingrecords.com)

#### WITCHES • 7"

This seven inch is a total throwback to slow, melodic 90s alt-rock with a heavy NIRVANA influence in the guitar and strong CAT POWER-jocking in the vocal department. The band is lady-fronted and from Athens, Georgia. Pretty decent photo-collage record sleeve and stoned poetic lyrics that evoke emotions of boring summer and walking alone and tense situations. These songs would not be out of place on the 90s BIG SHINY TUNES compilation or the *Reality Bites* soundtrack, like when Wynona Ryder is frantically packing a paper grocery bag full of clothes because she's leaving town to track down Ethan Hawke who she just realized she totally cares for. JG (Mandible Records • 60-59 Myrtle Ave. • Ridgewood, NY 11385)

#### WITCH HUNT • Blood Red States LP

When I first opened my package of records to review for the magazine, I stared in bewilderment to find a record that I remember buying over two years ago. But as I investigated further I realized that this is in fact the self-released version as opposed to the Profane Existence pressing. For those of you without your ear to ground of punk rock gossip, Profane and WITCH HUNT had a large falling out right before WITCH

HUNT's European tour a few years back. Feel free to take whatever side you'd like. As far as this record is concerned, *Blood Red States* is a great improvement from the band's previous LP. I would attribute this to the band's acquisition of a new drummer and having the old drummer take up second guitar duties giving this record an overall fuller feel. Musically, I would describe *Blood Red States* as mid tempo to fast melodic crust punk. Some people are quick to write this band off as a TRAGEDY rip off, but I hear some definite punk elements to this ala POST REGIMENT and even some early UK peace punk. Personally, I think that this is WITCH HUNT's best output to date and they have created a great record that goes beyond generic crust clichés. If at this point you haven't heard them or picked up this record, get on it. BN (Witch Hunt • P.O. Box 30923 • Philadelphia, PA 19104)

#### WORLD BURNS TO DEATH • The Graveyard of Utopia LP

The Graveyard of Utopia is the newest installment of these makeup-wearing hardcore warriors. For those who have never heard them before, WORLD BURNS TO DEATH plays dark hardcore punk with d-beats, raging solos, and parts which you can't help but bang your head and pump your fist to. They tend to have more of a rocking feel to their music than your average melodic crust band. I also hear a definite metal influence with parts that remind me of VENOM. This record was recorded during the band's most recent tour in Japan and some Japanese hardcore all-stars leave their mark on this record with guest solos. Most WORLD BURNS TO DEATH records have a defined lyrical theme dealing with war and death usually but Jack Control's lyrics tend to be more thematic as opposed to your average DISCHARGE record. The artwork is what you might expect with dark imagery galore. If you enjoy raging hardcore do yourself a favor and pick up this record and hear it from one of the best band's currently doing it. BN (Prank Records • PO Box 410892 • San Francisco, CA 94141 • prankrecords.com)

#### WORLD EATER / DAISYCUTTER • split 7"

This 7" has fifteen songs on it! Five tracks from Indianapolis' WORLD EATER and ten tracks from Fort Wayne, Indiana's DAISY CUTTER. Both Bands are playing pretty fast thrashy hardcore and powerviolence with the DAISY CUTTER side sounding more noisy and dirty. I feel like both of these bands are really influenced by things like NO COMMENT and IRON LUNG but I don't find either side very memorable or as exciting as these bands. The covers are nicely screened with silver on black paper. MM (Constant Migraine • 749 East Drive Apt. C • Indianapolis, IN 46201 • constantmigrainezone@hotmail.com)

#### WORST SUMMER EVER • CDR

It takes a lot for me to not hate folk-punk these days, but this is well done. It's interesting and has character and its own identity rather than just following in others' footsteps. This person usually plays under the name JEHOVAS FITNESS, but this seems to be it's own entity. A single, cohesive work in seven songs and a half-sized, nine-page zine. Cool. FIL (Jehovas Fitness • PO Box 4457 • San Diego, CA 92164)

#### WRITTEN & ERASED/BEARS • split CDR

Wait, is it WRITTEN AND ERASED and BEARS or is it ERASED BEARS and WRITTEN? (If it didn't actually say "split" on it, I'd think it was one band) but either way, it's pretty good. The artwork is very reminiscent of PG.99 with creepy, smiling, zombified clip-art faces. The first band fits with that aesthetic and is super screamy like REVER-SAL OF MAN and ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN TRAITORS. The second band (BEARS?) sound so similar that you almost don't notice the transition. They do cool things with multiple singers overlapping each other and have some nervously vulnerable parts as well. Recommended for fans of pained and chaotic, screamy hardcore. FIL (Shane Starrak • 414 2nd Avenue • Melbourne Beach, FL • 32951)

#### YUKON • Medallion CD

New wave seems to be percolating into many other genres of music, recently. It seems to me that "Medallion" borrows a bit from a dancy, syn-copated sound, infusing it like glowsticks in a moonbounce. The second and fourth songs are well constructed, post hardcore with a change up here and there. It just seems that the rest of the record is devoted more to dance music...a bit unnaturally. I remember seeing YUKON a couple



years ago in Washington DC, and not getting that feeling. I guess times change. JM (Infinite Limbs • Infinitelimb@gmail.com)

### YUKON • Mortar CD

Baltimore math-rock band YUKON's full-length CD is full of chaotic off-time drums, yelpy vocals and angular guitar lines. Their sound is reminiscent of bands like DON CABALLERO and HOOVER. The band fits in with the rest of the Baltimore art-punk scene, though it would be right at home with mid-1990s Dischord DC. Most appealing about this band is their ability to include melodic hooks that give life to the songs and differentiate them from many faceless math-rock bands. If the technical parts are the bricks, the melody is definitely the "mortar." MC (Terra Firma Records • 8316 Loch Raven Blvd. • Towson, MD 21286 • terrafirmarecords.com)

### ZANN/BURIAL YEAR • split LP

What a great pair of bands for a split release! Germany's ZANN comes in full force with one song of dark solid and heavy hardcore. California's BURIAL YEAR give us two songs of brutal metallic hardcore. Both bands also contribute a cover to the split. ZANN does a solid cover of CHOKEHOLD's "Burning Bridges" and BURIAL YEAR covers "Blanket" by UNBROKEN. I really appreciated ZANN's song explanations in the gatefold that talk about believing in yourself rather than a higher power/religion and how it's important to keep talking about veg(etari)anism in the forefront of hardcore punk. This is a really good split by some great bands and amazing people with a full color gatefold of artwork by Adam Hunt. MM (Adagio 830 Records • Marchlewski Str 107 • 10243 Berlin • Germany • adagio830.de)

### ZHENIA GOLOV • 7"

This is mid-paced 90s-flavored hardcore with super right-on lyrics, particularly to the songs "PC Fascist", from which I will excerpt this: "Racist jokes make humans into cartoons. Rape jokes reduce women to piles of body parts. I don't care how many gay friends you have, your words still make you a hateful piece of shit." Blunt, maybe a little clumsily written, but shit, it's just nice to read lyrics like these in 2009. SP (Railroaded Records • 85 Delafield St. • New Brunswick, NJ 08901)

### ZOMBIE DOGS • Pug's Not Dead TAPE

These Brooklyn ladies play an interesting blend of punk and hardcore; at times, I've found myself thinking of AGENT ORANGE or JFA, while at other times I find myself thinking of DC hardcore. The song "Not Yr B.a.b.e." has a bit of a ONE LAST WISH feel to it, though I'd certainly not call it first-wave emo. The lyrics are a straightforward attack, equally as quirky as they are confrontational. For those who have been keeping up on the massive amount of awesome demos coming out of Brooklyn these days, this band shares a member with the sorely missed CARNAL KNOWLEDGE, and though the music is in the same area code as CK, it's not a case of simply picking up where CK left off—ZOMBIE DOGS are their own beast. Oh, and also, one of the best things Brooklyn's got going for it these days. SP (Zombie Dogs • 538 Johnson Ave #203 • Brooklyn, NY 11237)

### ZS • Arms LP

Hmmm... minimal-no-wave-prog? Post free jazz? Whatever it is, it's weird, analog, and intoxicating. I love the staccato fury that starts this record. The horns or clarinets or whatever are all playing with each other in time, but against each other in tone and composition, resulting in a structured chaos. A later song applies group vocals to the same fast, choppy formula. For the adventurous music/art nerds. FIL (Gilgongo Records • PO Box 7455 • Tempe, AZ • 85281)

### V/A • Keep Singing! CD

It's endeavors like this that remind why it is that comps can be so awesome sometimes: it's focused, pointed and deliberate. It's smart. It's intent is clear. And the music, while varied to some degree, never loses its way or strays too far out into left field. A benefit comp for Compassion Over Killing, an animal advocacy group based out of DC, Keep Singing! features fifteen bands—with a lot of them contributing unreleased stuff, as far as I can tell. Tracks by LIFE AT THESE SPEEDS, DES ARK, SINALOA, AMPERE, OFF MINOR, SEAN MCARDLE, STRIKE

ANYWHERE and more. The booklet and the pdf contained on the CD have recipes provided by the bands, as well as lyrics. Again, it's thorough, thoughtful projects like this that keep me stoked on the concept of compilations. Best song here is also the first song. GINA YOUNG's "Too Cool To Cry"—a fucking spot-on dance-pop number with brilliant lyrics that document that the world isn't entirely such an "us vs. them" kind of place... until she almost ruins the song with the corniness of the last line. All in all, terrific job—I'm not saying you have to, but mayhap consider checking out exoticfever.com to learn more about the project. KR (Exotic Fever • PO Box 297 • College Park, MD 20741)

### V/A • Plan-It-X Comp #2 CD

If you've never heard of Plan-It-X, they put out DIY punk and folk that leans towards the cutesy side of things and they are dedicated to their community and to keeping music cheap, selling CDs for five dollars each. This sampler best serves those who are curious and/or already like something on this label. They are pretty consistent, so chances are good that you'll find at least a few more things that'll suit your fancy. Only about a third of the songs are unreleased, but there are 32 different bands on here including my personal faves THE BANANAS and ABE FROMAN. FIL (Plan-It X Records • PO Box 14001 • Gainesville, FL 32604 • plan-it-x.com)

### V/A • The Right to Assemble Volume Two LP

Before reviewing this LP I told myself I would check all my preconceived feelings about New Jersey at the door. I wouldn't think about the hours sitting on the NJ Turnpike driving between Connecticut and DC or its perpetual status as the "armpit of America." This compilation brings together twenty-three bands from New Brunswick to showcase what The Garden State has to offer. One great thing about this release is the diversity of bands that are featured. Although too many to mention them all, this record has tracks from ZHENIA GOLOV, MOTHER NIGHT, FANSHEN, THE FLASH ATTACKS and ENSIGN along with many others. The record opens with a short spoken word piece about diversity in punk and then goes into snotty political hardcore from THE DEGENERICS and the more modern hardcore stylings of SEASICK. Everyone's favorite soon to be defunct pop punk band THE ERGS even make an appearance. Some of the bands I was familiar with while others turned out to be pleasant surprises. The front page of the insert contains an inspirational letter about the New Brunswick punk scene written by Craig of DEGENERICS/KAMIKAZE fame and every band has their own half page to dedicate to whatever they see fit. The people of New Brunswick are lucky to have such committed people and great bands in their punk scene and this release is surely evidence of this fact. BN (SoulRebel Records • 230 Skillmans Lane • Somerset, NJ 08873)

### V/A • To Live A Lie Three Year Sampler CD

This is a CD sampler compilation celebrating the three years existence of To Live a Lie Records. It consists of roughly 40 or so different bands and a total of 51 tracks. Pretty much all of the bands on this thing sound very similar and they fall under the umbrella of fastcore, powerviolence, and grindcore. The bands that really stand out to me as the best of the bunch are MEHKAGO NT, FINAL DRAFT, and TERMINAL YOUTH. There are also some well known bands on this thing too like NO COMPLY, GODSTOMPER, AGATHOCLES, RHINO CHARGE, MAGRUDERGRIND, and UNHOLY GRAVE. My only complaint is that most of the bands sound the same so it's tough to get through all 51 tracks in one sitting and it kind of bugs me when record labels don't have an actual mailing address (printed on their records). I guess I need to get with the times. Brutal stuff. KMK (To Live a Lie Records • 1306 Flint Place • Raleigh, NC 27605 • tolivealie.com)

### V/A • Vancouver Simplification TAPE

This comp rules. I just listened to it on my bike on my way downtown and it plays like any good DIY punk/hardcore mix tape. It's well balanced and a good mix of shit I've never heard before. One band sounds like UNIFORM CHOICE mixed with early-AVAIL. A couple bands have a cool garagey sound, but most are more hardcore and then there is some stoner crust, some weirder and/or mellower stuff and some crusty, metally stuff. If you're not listening to it on your bike or what-

ever, the lyric sheet makes this something that you can sit down with and follow along with, too. FIL (\$6ppd Chad Loewen • 638 Hawks Ave. • Vancouver, BC V6A 3J1)

### V/A • We Do What We Want 7"

This Olympia punk comp is the kind of record that reminds me of why I love punk. As I flip through the huge, twenty-page, 7x7-inch photocopied insert I'm bombarded with just how much love and care these DIY punks seem to have for their community and each other. It's inspiring for sure. The bands flow together effortlessly, weaving together a unique blend of ugly, trashy, pained melodies. I'm especially stoked on HOOKY and SON SKULL\*, but this whole comp is solid with songs from BLACK BEAR, COMIN UP ROSES and SHOREBIRDS. I'm gonna order another one, because I already put a skip in this one, but I still listen to it all the time. It says "Vol. 1" so I hope to see more of these. (\*even though we interviewed them in the last issue, I actually hadn't ever heard them until I got this, so I was excited to find out that they were as good as everyone was saying.) FIL (Rumbletowne Records • PO Box 663 • Olympia, WA 98507 • rumbletowne.com)

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# BOOK & ZINE

Chris Clavin, OH = Greg Harvester, NM = Hugh McElroy, ID = Julia Driscoll  
JG = Jule Generec, KOC = Katie O'Connor, MC = Mikey Cantor, MM = Meghan  
Minor, SP = Stephen Pierce, TF = Travis Fristoe

# REVIEWS

## A ZINE 4 THE LADIES • 5.5x8.5 • 44pgs • \$4

A cool zine put together by xhannahx of Southampton, England. This zine heavily focuses on women and women in punk with a strong focus on straight edge and vegansim. There is an introduction interview with Hannah in the beginning of the zine instead of an introduction written by her, which I thought was pretty cool. There was a pretty awesome interview with Suie from the vegan cookbook *Lickin' The Beaters* about how she got her book published and some news on her new upcoming cookbook based on chocolate and candy! There is also an interview with Kim who puts on shows in Reading, it talks about how she got started booking shows and her advice to others. I also liked the interview with XjelenaX of Bake Down The Walls, a vegan food stall to have at shows. There are also interviews with a tattoo artist named Mary, Isy from *Another Dinner Is Possible* cookbook, the singer of AUCHTUNG EVERYBODY, and a lot more! I'd like to see more issues of this zine in the future! MM

(A Zine 4 the Ladies • PO Box 1398 • Southampton • S016 9WX • UK)

## ABORT! #20 • 5.5x8.5 • 56 pgs

Total jam band of zines. It's like, just because you're a talented musician with a firm grasp on scales and harmonies and obscure time signatures, it doesn't mean I will enjoy listening to your band. Similarly, just because you're an obviously really smart individual with tight grammar skills and a huge vocabulary and smart insights on the socialization of gender and morality, it doesn't mean I will want to read your 60-page unorganized self-exploratory creative nonfiction/prose-poetry. I'm not being a total square here, demanding everyone adhere to the conventional elements of story-telling—I can jive with all that po-mo shit—but, seriously, anything at all resembling a thematic thread or transitions between paragraphs and ideas or anything to keep me engaged from one dense page to the next would've been nice. Also, the philosopher fanfiction was a little much. JG (Jonathan Spies • 45 E 7th St. #106 • New York, NY 10003)

## ALWAYS NEVER FUN #4 • 8.5x5 • 38pgs • \$3/trade

Cool! A punk/hc zine out of New Zealand focusing mostly on New Zealand and Australian DIY punk communities. Having spent a lot of time in Australia, it's nice to read about my favorite bands from there who are so criminally unrecognized on our shitty side of the world. It's chock full of interviews, reviews, flyer art, and pictures of friends. Do yourself a favor: pick up this zine & get to know Aus/NZ DIY punk. SP (Always Never Fun • 70 Owen St. • Newtown • Wellington • New Zealand • stunsmas@yahoo.co.nz)

## AWAKE TODAY #1 • 4.25 x 5.5 • 16 pgs • Free/Trade/Donation

The creator of this zine explains in the introduction that this is a collection of his before bed writings and that's what it feels like. There is a story about a rope swing and its metaphors. There is a poem about time. There is a story about sitting in the woods and thinking about freedom. My favorite part is the poem about the birds that hang out at the train station. The point of the poem is to ask the question: why the train station, when you could fly to any paradise. CC (Luke Romano • Radical Rabbit Distro • PO Box 2748 • Tucson, AZ 85702)

## BELOW NOON #2 • 4.25x5.5 • 48pgs • \$2/Trade

This is one of those zines out of Portland with an introduction explaining the format ("experimental memoir-ish type shit"), and that it's just

three hours until the zine symposium and she really, really hopes she gets the zine done in time and hopefully in the future, the zine will come out more consistently. Section one of the zine is all about the writer's childhood penchant for public masturbation. I like zines about shit like that, but I don't like poetry zines, which is what this leans towards. Section two is random writings, ie. "Here's an e-mail I sent to my stepsister." I understand the cathartic purpose of people putting out zines like this, but I guess I feel like the whole zine genre would be less mediocre if zine writers took their writing more seriously and compiled comprehensible and interesting stories rather than publishing straight-up diary entries for the world to skim through. JG (Angie P • PO Box 42123 • Portland, OR 97242 • belownoon@gmail.com)

## BELOW NOON #3 • 4.25x5.5 • 48 pgs • \$2/Trade

Nice printing and a pro stapling job here, as is the norm in Portlandia zines. The first page (the cover?) however is an all-caps, run-on mess. But some may enjoy a more dramatic style, which is how the storytelling goes here too—lots of ellipses and drawn-out narratives. There's a tale of our editor beginning her "life of tiny rebellions" by peeing in a school trash-can. And the whiskey flask romance is well-written. The unapologetic bits about "my ass perched precariously on a barstool in the most prominent corner of some random pub, tapping on a drum between my legs" will probably scare away most of the uptight Give Me Back readers though. Zine ends with a mad lib and a promise of mix-cd exchanges. TF (Below Noon • PO Box 42123 • Portland, OR 97242 • belownoon@gmail.com)

## BFF • by Nate Beaty • \$9

The book's subtitled "comics by Nate Beaty from 1999-2007" and culls bits from his Brainfag zine. Evidently, the 'fag' part of the name refers to 'fatigue' and was used in an old Grape Nuts ad. The comics are better than the name—all black, white & gray-washes in a great array of styles. Some are scratchy, panelless and diary-like, others have a formal narrative and well-constructed backgrounds. As is the norm in this medium, these are first-person comics and with a varying degree of interest to the reader. The love life and childhood of the creator is not intrinsically story-worthy. Nate's a decent storyteller even if he admits "I'm terrible at fictionalizing." If you're into autobiographical comics and charming drawing styles, then the \$9 required here is a bargain. TF (Microcosm Publishing • 222 S. Rogers St. • Bloomington, IN 47404 • microcosmpublishing.com)

## BIG HANDS #5 ½ • 5.5x8.5 • 48pgs + Tape

This is "the CHUMBAWAMBA issue." It's an interesting subject for anarchists and peace punks. The first half is pure music-journalism of a thoroughness and professionalism that you don't often see in photocopied zines. The second half is filled with liner notes, pamphlets and reprinted interviews from MRR and Flipside. To top it off, it comes with a long-ass tape which I appreciated since I've never ventured far from their first two classic LPs. Well done. FIL (Big Hands c/o Aaron Lake Smith • 1104 Imperial Rd. • Cary, NC 27511 • aaronlakesmith@gmail.com)

## CHARCOAL • By Jasmine Dreame Wagner

This is a book of poetry by the person who does CABINET OF NATURAL

CURIOSITIES (see the review and check that out first). If anyone out there actually reads contemporary poetry, get in touch if you want to do reviews for us because we must all be too dumb to get it. Pretty words. FIL (PO Box 3856 • Missoula, MT • 59806)

## COMMUNICATING VESSELS #20 • 7x8.5 • 48pg

The cover for this is really nice. Seriously, the colors are lovely. The content, however... I get the impression that this zine is made by one dude. While there are a bunch of pretty good old-timey essays (I liked the section on utopia), the rest of the content, written by this one dude, are really, really long articles that include way too much editorializing and anecdote. For instance, the article on the state of contemporary book publishing that is seven pages long: One and a half pages are devoted to the author's personal childhood history of liking books and then how and why and the process by which he ended up talking a job at Borders. Also, none of the historical stuff is backed up. Maybe I'm just really into brevity but most of the writing in here comes off as super didactic and self-indulgent. JG (Communicating Vessels • 3527 NE 15th Ave. #127 • Portland, OR 97212)

## CRACKS IN THE CONCRETE #10 • 5.5x8.5 • 40pgs

• free/trade/donation Do you like unpretentious anarchist journals? Here's one. Besides the "Old School Anarchist Propaganda Section," (featuring an excerpt from an essay by Errico Malatesta), Cracks in the Concrete stays relevant, up-to-date, and interesting, addressing current events (arrests at NRC, cop taser murders), the problems with moral stances against substance abuse, among other things. There's also a pretty interesting critique on shoplifting. Worth checking out. JG (Luke Romano • Radical Rabbit Distro • PO Box 2748 • Tucson, AZ 85702)

## FAG SCHOOL #3 • 8.5 x 11 • 32 pgs • \$3.50

Brontez is the cultural ambassador for the queer punk nation, for which I could only hope to get a spot on the waiting list for citizenship. Remember that part of Wayne's World where they meet Alice Cooper and he tells them about the real pronunciation of Milwaukee? They get on the ground and start bowing and worshipping and saying "we're not worthy" over and over again. That is how I feel about Fag School. Every page, every word, is fucking brilliant. Poignant, hilarious, relevant, and fiercely political in all the right ways, FS is shocking and absurd while also unexplainable. The writing can find the simplest way of saying ten things at once. Of course, there are tons of reviews of cruising, but this issue also covers blackouts and nightmare parties, plus "Definition of a Rollerblader." And you get an interview with NEW BLOODS (RIP forevers we will always miss you) and Jenna Riot, tons of pinups, and the oft-revered Ask Alison advice column, with high knowledge handed down from grrrl heaven by Alison Wolfe. This is always the zine of the year for me, I absolutely can't recommend this highly enough. JB (Brontez1@aol.com)

## FAKE LIFE #7 • 5.5 x 8.5 • 32 pgs

This is a collaborative zine with some fiction and some interviews. Some of the work feels like a creative writing project but with a sense of humor. The interviews are the best part. My favorite one is the Deran



Ludd interview. Ludd is the author of a "punk/queer" book called, "sick burn cut". There are also interviews with Bromance and an internet/ ebay artist named Gus Fink who does dark, chaotic and quickly produced art seemingly just to sell as fast as possible. CC (Fake Life • PO Box 1174 • Tallahassee, FL 32302 • pxsdistro.com)

### **FAKE LIFE #8 • 5.5x8.5 • 60pgs • \$2/trade**

This is a zine by a full-grown adult about shit. Like, literal shit. Was shock value the intent here? Well, I wasn't shocked, other than the shock that comes from realizing that someone saw it fit to actually cobble something like this together. To top that all off, the phrase "racist, but in a good way" is used in the review section. What way is that? Hm. I hope that no friend of mine ever puts something like this together and asks my opinion. SP (Fake Life • same address • pxsdistro.com)

### **FATHER, SON & HOLY SMOKES! #1 • 4.25x5.5 • 16pgs • free**

This is a short, quick, sloppily drawn zine made by young North Dakotan posi-punk who are experimenting with the idea of communicating outside of the world of Myspace. Seriously. But given that explanation on the last page, it seems odd that the page of cool things in their city was just a laundry list of Myspaces. It's a first step. Keep going. If you can relate, send them a letter, zine, or postcard of encouragement. FIL (720 2nd Ave. NE • Minot, ND 58703)

### **51% POSITIVE • 3.5 x 4.25 16 pgs**

I'm not sure why we got this. It is part of an interview that will be released (or has already been released) in full, in the complete issue of a zine of the same name. Despite that fact, it is very interesting. The subject of the interview is Jen/ED. The discussion is mostly based on sexuality and gender. They cover a lot of ground, from the ancient Greeks to the punks of today. I'd like to read the rest of the interview. CC (Pedro Angel Serrano • PO Box 1445 • Perth Amboy, NJ 08862-1445 • old-manpedro@gmail.com)

### **GULLIBLE #28 • 5.5x8.5 • 24 pgs • \$1**

How many zines reach it to #28? I'm thinking Chumfire, Slug and Lettuce & CTBS. And unlike some of us who take years between issues (thinking they have to all be magnum dopuses), CT Terry understands the immediacy & pleasures of the format. Gullible gives a quick but not uncritical read. About half of this issue is comics, a crowd-pleaser of simple pen drawings. Entitled "Chilling" it takes on the universal theme of partying and roommates. Fitting for punks of all ages and not unlike fellow ex-Richmonder Ben Snakepit, the RVA aesthetic permeates the zine: tales of the boob-bong, Hookah Guy anecdotes & how saying "No Skanks" at a party will get you punched in the face. Redeemed by the endlines: "I was sneaking past college age, and when I went out looking for a good time, all that I could turn up was proof that the guy my friends and I had been joking on was having more fun than me." For full-disclosure I'll say that I like CT and dug it when his band came to the Ark. Even when he was too drunk to sing and threw-up in our driveway. We all had a blast anyway. Like Fil says, "It just feels like the type of voice that is becoming rare in print these days...drunk and analytical." Recommended. TF (CT Terry • 4611 N. Ashland Ave. Apt. 2 • Chicago, IL 60640 • Gulliblezine@gmail.com)

### **INSIPIDLY IDAHO #1 • 5.5 x 8.5 • 60 pgs • \$2/Trade**

I hope there will be a #2. This is a personal fiction and or truth tale about the authors two best friends who are now dead. It opens with him trying to figure out what to say about them. He settles on, "they were fat and they are dead". From there the story goes in many directions: Punk rock in portland, the weezer fan club, mormon missionaries and mix tapes. I laughed out loud several times while reading it and passed it to a friend when I finished it. The language is crude and direct. Kind of like a slightly drunk friend telling you a really good and from the heart story. It is hand written and cut and paste which really adds to the pacing of the story. It's good. I liked it. CC (Enchantment Under the Stars • 616 SE Harrison St. • Portland, OR 97214)

### **I REMEMBER HALLOWEEN #1 • 8.5x5.5 • 44pgs • \$2/trade**

Punk zine full of pixelated photos out of the Philippines with a heavy

focus on the international punk scene. Devon from that international all-star thrash unit CONQUEST FOR DEATH discusses touring Africa and SE Asia, PAZAHORA from Singapore talk about getting busted by Muslim cops for drinking in Malaysia, ESKAPO from Vallejo, California jump back and forth between English and Tagalog, punks around the world are asked what their favourite MISFITS song is, and there are scene reports from Greece, Estonia, and Indonesia. Most of the interviews fit on a two-page spread and are conversational and interesting. My only complaint is the apparently globalized access to that fucking Mom's Typewriter font. You know the one. We've all used it. It doesn't have characters for a lot of symbols and throws in these stupid-looking boxes. Otherwise, a gem. JG (Dane Cortes • #24 M Roxas St. Lot 18 • AFPOVAL Fort Bonifacio • 1630 Western Bicutan • Philippines)

### **MAJOR MALFUNCTION #7 • 5.5x8.5 • 48 pgs**

A half-size fanzine out of the Philippines, covering a wide spectrum of topics. There's an article on suspected C.I.A.-backed assassinations of subversive rock musicians in the 60s and 70s, a tutorial on how to start a record label, interviews with bands DIE YOUNG (Texas), DIVIDED WE FALL (Filipino Krishna-core), FUMBLES IN LIFE (Italy), SHOW NO MERCY (Baltimore Satanist hardcore), plus an editorial from Commitment Records on why they only release straight-edge bands. Of course, there's tons of fanzine and record reviews too. Totally worth picking up, especially if you have an interest in international punk/hardcore. As it says in the introduction, "Remarkable friendship starts with constant communication," so track this dude down! JG (xmajormalfunctionx@yahoo.com)

### **MANAGER #5 • 4.25 x 5.5 • 28 pgs**

This is the continuing story of Jack, the grocer. Jack is a punk from the DC area who has been in the grocery business for quite a while now and has a lot of good stories to show for it. Manager is a cut and paste mix of punk and country lyrics to Jack's favorite songs and stories about working in a grocery store. My favorite part of this issue is the Bios of some of his coworkers. If you have ever worked at a grocery store, I have, you will really like this. If not, it's still good. CC (Manager Zine • 1409 Longfellow St. NW • Washington, DC 20011 • Jack45rpm@gmail.com)

### **MIX TAPERS DO IT BETTER #3/YOUR DAY WILL COME #2 • 8.5x5.5 • 40pgs. • trade**

There are a lot of great zines coming out of Florida these days. These two are tangentially related to a personal favorite: *Seven Inches To Freedom*. I especially appreciate the narrow focus of each side of this split. First is the endearing ode to mix tapes that is always an enjoyable quick read. Then on the darker side of things, flip it over and explore the world of shocking and disturbing horror movies and exploitation films. Join John in his search for a film that will literally make him sick or retreat to the other side with Karen and the simple joys of biking to a sweet mix. FIL (John Fahy • 15011 Lakeside View Drive • Ft. Myers, FL 33919 • fahy\_john@hotmail.com)

### **MOSTLY TRUE • April 1908 • by Bill Daniel**

I guess this dude Bill Daniel spent 25 years obsessing over hobo graffiti and made this film *Who is Bobo Texino?* This book documents this journey by way of inclusion of what might have piqued his interest in the first place: photographs of beautiful contemporary "aerosol" graffiti; articles from old railroad enthusiast papers; interviews with hobos; a freight-hopping story; articles on recent freight-gang murders; tons of old hobo art; and then a bunch of cool old timey magazine ads for bikes, tattoo shops, model trains, and other related sundries that completes the book's resemblance to some kind of train-hop mythology worship fanzine. It's one of the prettiest things I've seen in a long time and it's only seven bucks to boot. Also, it's cool to see Microcosm putting out shit like this, like things that are far outside the punk ghetto (besides some pictures of freight punx tags, no one in this book has anything to do with the Crimethinc-related travelpunk explosion you might associate train-hopping with) but still hold totally true to the underground. JG (Microcosm Publishing • 222 S. Rogers St. • Bloomington, IN 47404 • microcosmpublishing.com)

### **THE NEW SCHEME #18 • 8.5x11 • 48pgs**

This is a music zine with interviews with PAINT IT BLACK, YOUNG LIVERS, and a personal favorite ANTLERS. There is an interesting article about cassette tape labels, featuring the labels Dead Format, Utard Tapes, and Coriander Tapes. MC (PO Box 18830 Denver, Co 80218)

### **NO QUARTER: a zine about radical history #3 • 8.5x7 • 40pgs**

"This zine is one (very) small part of a current of radical history situated outside of universities and other centers of learning...There is no such thing as radical history that does not contain the impetus to act." No intense photos of TRAGEDY looking burly in this anarcho-zine, but the review section is 20 pages long. The layout is legible and the content lively—no small accomplishment in the world of political zines. The reviews are of generous length and each quotes from the material to give you a better idea of what's being relayed. Some film reviews, too. We also get an interview with the Bristol Radical History Group, and a translated trial statement from 19th-century French anarchist Emile Henry. Readers already versed in terms like illegalist & "propaganda by the deed" will find this issue very useful, and I hope that intellectually-curious others will pick it up as well. TF (captainmissionismycopilot@hotmail.com)

### **OLLY OLLY OXEN FREE #4 • 4.25x5.5 • 40pgs • \$2/trade/3stamps**

This is an easy reference guide to 13 dice games. Perfect for traveler kids or anyone with a lot of time to kill. I especially appreciate the simple, yet attractive typewriter-based layout that makes this easy to use and nice to look at. Obviously there are going to be subtle variations to some of these games, for example, their version of Cee Low has a more complicated betting system that makes it feel more like craps than the winner-take-all style that I'm used to. There's something truly inspiring about a little zine with a singular focus and practical use. Highly Recommended. FIL (Olly Olly Oxen Free • 553 Mud Splash Rd. • Glendale, KY 42740 • shakes@riseup.net)

### **ONG-ONG #4 • 8.5x7 • 52pgs, w/CDr & stickers • \$7**

Art school zine? Definitely reads like an undergraduate literary magazine with indie-aesthetics. Which isn't necessarily an insult. What tips the scales towards the zine side is an article on "What Men Can Do to Combat Sexism" and all the ads for record stores. There's an enthusiasm throughout that's pretty refreshing, and a few of the comics were interesting. But the punk purists (ie, those boycotting anything remotely new age) will shudder at the teenage story of seeing BLUE CHEER & JEFFERSON AIRPLANE play: "The Airplane were the head magicians, and their tricks were astonishing. Making authority disappear, saving reality in half. Like a beautiful swan gliding through the apocalypse, Grace was dropping us willingly off the cliff." Choose the red pill! I don't mind such things, but I like stories such as the legend of BLACK FLAG playing on campus here in Gainesville and the only person who could stand the volume & intensity was the annoying longhair, hippie record clerk. The Seattle-specificity of this zine was nice. And a good plasma story. But beer reviews? And when you describe someone as looking like a D&D player, what's that mean? The dice-throwers are as different from the MMORPG dudes as CAPTAIN CHAOS is from DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL! The enclosed "recovered vinyl" cd is a mix of the kid's records you find in thrift stores. Draw your own conclusions. TF (Ong Ong Fanzine • 315 E. Pine St. • Seattle, WA 98122 • ongonpress.com)

### **ON SUBBING: The First Four Years • by Dave Roche**

This is a pretty remarkable book. It chronicle's Dave Roche's four years of substitute teaching in special education classes in Portland, OR from 2000 to 2004. He begins with an explanation of how he got into subbing and it's one that's pretty resonant for a lot of punks moving through their twenties: "Defining myself by what I don't like and what I won't do served me well in my early 20s, but I felt I reached a point where I had to figure out what I do like. And I wanted a job where I felt like I was doing something worthwhile". He follows with a quick glossary of special education terms and begins telling his story. Most of the book is made up of diary-style entries for specific dates and schools he worked at. Some of them are short and funny, like an early entry about feeling uncomfortable in High School gyms even as an adult, but many are heart-



breaking. At one point two of his students have been abandoned by their mother. Roche writes about all of this with sympathy and awareness and it's really impressive to see how he reflects on his own reactions to the difficulties of being a teacher. It's also pretty clear that he got better and more confident about the job as he went along. While the book sheds a lot of light on special education (which is great), a lot of what hit me in the book was about the challenges of being a teacher, generally, and more particularly of being a punk teacher. Little things, like lifestyle tensions that come up when you are, say, vegan and anarchist and working in an environment that in most cases expects setting a more orthodox social example for students, inspired empathy. But Roche also raises more serious philosophical problems, such as whether to discipline kids for doing something he himself had done as a kid or still does now. He also demonstrates by example how having a one-size-fits-all approach in teaching, especially teaching kids who learn differently or have special needs, is a waste of time. Some of the anecdotes that touch on this are hair-raising, since they make you consider that some of the most vulnerable students are at risk of being placed with teachers unwilling to put the students' individual needs before their own philosophy of teaching. As a teacher I found the book incredibly engaging and in some ways inspiring. That said I think anyone interested in education, or in the dilemma that led Roche to subbing would do well to check it out. "I feel like my biggest job is to teach kids it's ok to be weird, that when you grow up you don't have to become boring or a jerk," Roche writes in the preface. It's an idea that's always worth being reminded of. HM (Microcosm Publishing • 222 S. Rogers St. • Bloomington, IN 47404 • [www.microcosmpublishing.com](http://www.microcosmpublishing.com))

### **PICARESQUE #10 • 5.5x8.5 • 20 pgs. • \$2**

This is a disjointed collection of Brendan's "memoirs", which basically amounts to a collection of A.D.D.-inspired blurbs about his life between the ages of 22 and 28. Apparently, it's also the last issue of his zine. That's really too bad because now the reader can no longer learn more about the author's dick, who he'd like to slap in the face with it, how he thinks his life is better than his ex (because she got hit by a car) or how much he yells at his girlfriend. Great reading, folks! I'm kidding. I think it's total shit. GH, (Brendan • c/- 17 Mayes St. • Stawell, Victoria • Australia 3380 • [brendanrocks@hotmail.com](mailto:brendanrocks@hotmail.com))

### **PRISONERS' DILEMMA #3 • 7x8.5 • 40 pgs**

Zine out of Seattle examining labor and labor activism, part one of two. Totally revelant and interesting. I particularly liked the interview with the Casa Latina, a group in Seattle that advocates for workers rights for illegal immigrant workers/day laborers. Also good was the article written by the social worker, examining the fucked-up dilemmas of working in that sector, i.e. are you helping people survive within a fucked up system or are you helping integrate outsiders into mainstream society? Also includes a really updated overview of the current state of sweatshop activism and provides critiques of popular "non-sweatshop" brands. Also, there's an interview with someone from Left Bank Books, the oldest collectively-run bookstore in the US. Pick it up! JG (Prisoners' Dilemma • PO Box 95006 • Seattle, WA • 98145-2006)

### **PROFANE EXISTENCE #56 • 8.5x11 • 84pgs • \$5**

Most of what you could imagine about Profane Existence is true here. I'll focus on the positives: the PROTESTANT interview is interesting & engaging, and Maygun's Vegan Recipes section remains to be a nice addition. I'd like to see more zines with features like this. This time around, her column is Italian-themed, with recipes for spinach lasagna, tofu cacciatore, and tiramisu. Oh hell yeah. SP (Profane Existence • PO Box 18051 • Minneapolis, MN 55418 • [profaneexistence.com](http://profaneexistence.com))

### **PUNK ZINE • The Art History Issue • 11x17 • 48pgs • free**

This is huge! It has a good and sloppy cut & paste style that works on this scale—occasionally I was like "ok, this maybe doesn't have to be this big" because it was like pixilated or something, but who cares? Overall it looks awesome. I can't believe it's free. I think it was like a college art project, like with funding or something. Anyway, I enjoyed the narrow, local focus—all the interviews and features seem to all be things connected with their native Columbus, OH. There are interviews with flyer makers, historic punk house dwellers, and band members.

The editor admits in one interview to it being their first time, but if that has any impact on these interviews, it's not a hinderance. I especially appreciate the scope of the interview subjects, not being limited to bands or celebrities, yet narrowed by local relevance. You might guess from the name, that there is a certain amount of arrogance to this project. There's a little of that, but I like it when young punks decide that it's time to reinvent shit. This scene gets stale fast and can always use some shaking up, you know. In the intro, they criticize the review sections of zines like ours, basically saying that in trying to review so much, we over simplify descriptions and force things into boxes. I agree with that, and I hope their zine inspires more local punk zines. I look forward to an issue two. Highly recommended. FIL (James Payne • 115 W. 10th Ave. • Columbus, OH 43201)

### **A ROUGH GUIDE TO BICYCLE MAINTENANCE • 5.5x8.5 • 16pgs • \$1**

Exactly as it claims. This guide was put together for a workshop, but it works well on its own and it's a good place to start. Covers flats, brakes, tools, and other tips including "how to deal with shops"! It looks real good, too. The back cover is one of the prettiest bike diagrams I've ever seen. FIL (Microcosm Publishing • 222 S. Rogers St. • Bloomington, IN 47404 • [www.microcosmpublishing.com](http://www.microcosmpublishing.com))

### **SEVEN INCHES TO FREEDOM #6 • 5.5x8.5 • 40 pgs**

Solid punk/hc half-size fanzine. This issue ("The Mostly Florida Issue") has okay columns, thoughtful reviews, a "my first record" section, and an informative and expansive feature on the huge hardcore, pop-punk, and emo shit going down in Florida in the late 90s. Think HOT WATER MUSIC, PALATKA, REVERSAL OF MAN, and AGAINST ME! The layout for this zine is totally raw but also totally readable. Tight. Everything a fanzine should be. JG (Joe Lachut • PO Box 457 • Ft. Myers, FL • 33902-0457)

### **SEVENTEEN GREEN EYES #1 • 4.25x5.5 • 40pgs**

• \$1/trade Great first issue. The bulk of it consists of a thoughtful and interesting interview with Robert Eggplant of Absolutely Zippo—a bay area punk zine that has been going since the late eighties. They talk about his involvement in projects like Slingshot, Gilman St., The Long Haul, and about punk relevance in general. Overall, it's a nice mix of a carefree, sloppy aesthetic, with engaging content, so it makes sense that he would like Zippo. FIL (Ian c/o Open Face Records • PO Box 282 • North Bennington, VT 05257 • [whaleskeleton@yahoo.com](mailto:whaleskeleton@yahoo.com))

### **SONGS ABOUT GHOSTS • 5.5x8.5 • 112 pgs**

I like it. It's long stories about a girl in Brooklyn who gave up working for a pharmaceutical company in LA and came back home to work in an under-code coffee shop and drink beer on fire escapes and talk to her neighbors a lot. Her and her friends are sad and have self-destructive tendencies. It's worse in the winter when they drive around the city, fish-tailing on ice, but then the summer comes back and it's a bit better again. Strong, above-average writing that evokes feelings of how sad and lonely life is. Good read for cold days when you hate parties and want to feel sorry for yourself in a comforting way. JG (PO Box 3956 • Missoula, MT • 59806)

### **TRANSLATE #2 • 5.5x8 • 32 pgs • \$2/\$3**

If I say that this zine is from Syracuse and full of pictures and flyers of bands like BLOODLET, INK & DAGGER, INTO ANOTHER, etc., then you'll probably know sight-unseen if you're interested. East coast straight-edge will always be a timeless and polarizing faction. But the nameless editor (Hex?) writes in a clear, unpretentious manner and I found this a pretty good read and not something I'd normally come across. Interviews with political prisoner Jalil Muntajim and 2 band guys, plus a brief history of the Westcott Community Center. The pages and pages of headlines & random photos seem like filler though—save the trees, dude. TF (Translate • 201 Maple Ln. • N. Syracuse, NY 13212 • [hanginhex@hotmail.com](mailto:hanginhex@hotmail.com))

### **TRASH AND GARNISH #3 • 5.5 x 8.5 • 16 pgs • \$3**

This is a poetry 'zine that should be called erotic, I think. Charles Bukowski comes to mind. I like Charles Bukowski a lot but this stuff gets

close to sounding like something in the letters section of a porn mag. It has it's moments of greatness. There are a few art pages in between the lusty lines. One of them looks like a xerox of pubes. CC (Phonographic Arts • 1601 Castle Ct. #6 • Houston, TX 77006)

### **VERBICIDE #23 • 8.5x11 • 48pgs**

The cover of this magazine really threw me off. It has THE DONNAS on the cover presenting their favorite unsigned bands. At first glance, it appears to be another Alternative Press-style "underground" music magazine. This magazine tends to delve a little deeper, featuring articles about GOVERNMENT ISSUE's John Stabb, hip-hop karaoke, unsigned bands that could "make it" and a section called "ask a ninja." Not too much going on here. MC ([verbicidemagazine.com](http://verbicidemagazine.com))

### **WHEN LANGUAGE RUNS DRY: a zine for people with chronic pain and their allies #1 • 8.5x5.5 • 48pgs • \$4**

I enjoyed this zine, however, as someone who has had her share of chronic illnesses, I must admit that I am biased. This collection of personal essays describes a lot of things I can relate to like feeling like people ask how you're doing but don't really want to know, and being sick and feeling alone, forgotten or altogether ignored—yes, even in the (gasp!) diy community. Illnesses that are long-term and/or difficult to diagnose are all too common, even among 20-somethings. However, there isn't always much space or support for those who are in less than perfect health. All the better for this zine to exist! There is something for everyone in here. It isn't too wordy and it isn't too long—in fact I wish it were longer, but they are working on a sequel right now. They're also seeking submissions. If you are dealing with chronic pain or taking care of someone who is and you have something to share, write to [nevertwice@yahoo.com](mailto:nevertwice@yahoo.com). KOC ([nevertwice.etsy.com](http://nevertwice.etsy.com))

### **YOU: ...the first five years • 7x9.5 • \$20 plus postage**

"The book is an anthology of the first five years of the anonymous "YOU" zine from Melbourne, Australia. The zine has been produced on paper every week since November 2001 and continues to be made on paper every week today." Well, no lies on the description here—there's 5-years worth of weekly correspondence now put into a book. And I'm all for mail, personal correspondence & documentation. But I cannot in good faith endorse this endeavor. For those giving & receiving the letters, I'm sure it's awesome. For the rest of us however the You book is as awkward and presumptive as other people's cell-phone conversations. Even in a voyeuristic, Griffin & Sabine way, this isn't a necessary use of the Earth's resources or human's limited time here. I do appreciate the veggie-inks & recycled paper. The layout's decent and the book itself is easy to skim or open to a random page. I would've at least liked to have seen the covers & formats from all the issues over the years. The zine itself seems to be fun & creative art project—why not leave it at that? Or, better, attempt another project. The legacy of zines is more than this. TF (Breakdown Press • [breakdownpress.org](http://breakdownpress.org))

### **YOU #353/WESTSIDE ANGST #13 • 8.5x5.5 • 40 pgs**

This "very special" metal issue is worth tracking down for the WA side subtitled "Valuable Lessons I Learnt From MOTORHEAD. Written By an Actual Doctor." Each of ten songs are nerdlily dissected in two parts. First are the "facts" filled with fanatical details. Then there are the "lessons" which take a deeper look at Lemmy's philosophies and compares them to those of Roland Barthes, Judith Butler and others. The illustrations seal the deal. Highest recommendation. It will make you want to listen. FIL (Dr. Janto Ware c/o S.A.I.P.A. • 1 Kanbara St • Flinders Park • South Australia • Australia • 5025 • [kanbara@senet.com.au](mailto:kanbara@senet.com.au))

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